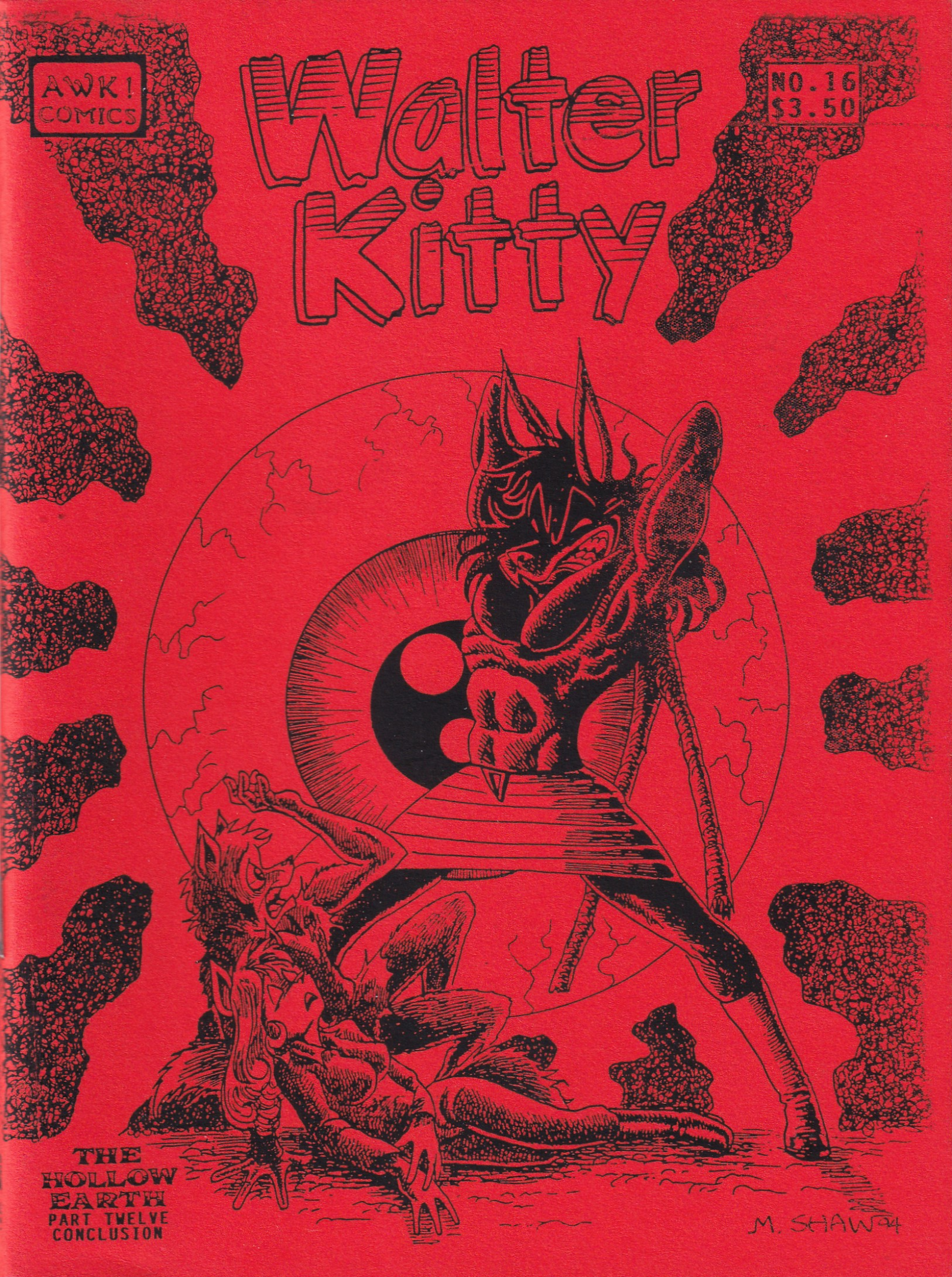
AWK! COMICS

Walter Kitty

NO. 16
$3.50



THE HOLLOW EARTH
PART TWELVE
CONCLUSION

FINITO!

WELCOME to **WALTER KITTY # 16**-- and Part 12, the conclusion of "The Hollow Earth" !

YAYY! RAZZZ! HONK! HONK! BBRAAPP!! FFRRAAZZPKLBGRAGH!! That noise you hear is the sound of Uncle Mark celebrating!

This climactic chapter is the wrap-up of a comic story bugun nearly eight years ago-- and has spanned almost five hundred pages! During that time, massive amounts of Aquabee bristol plate paper was consumed, as well as hundreds of disposable rapidiograph pens, and gallons of White-out and liquid paper! It makes me afraid to contemplate how much this comic may have contributed to tree-razing, and industrial and global pollution!

Everything gets settled in this action-packed, slam-bang, shoot-em-up installment--all loose ends are connected, and all conflicts are resolved.

So, what is the fate of our little cast of characters? Who will survive, and what will be left of them?

Well, you'll have to turn the page to find out! So check your canteen, strap on your safety roap and hurl yourself into the void...

...for the final time...

Your worn-out chum,

"Uncle"
Mark

Walter Kitty
in

THE HOLLOW EARTH

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE

After stealing the soul of **Mariana**, one of the only two people able to summon the immense power of **the Source** -- the evil **Zanomanon** gained control of that awesome entity. **Catherine Foxx**, the only **other** person able to summon the Source, invokes it to protect the citizens of **Agharta** in their battle with Zanomanon's **army** of **Boot soldiers** and **ships** -- only to be confronted by Zanomanon summoning the **evil side** of **the Source** to wage war against the **positive** side.

Meanwhile, **Dr. Foxx**, with information provided by **Dennis**, Walter's one-eyed, all-seeing friend, has undertaken it upon himself to infiltrate **Zanomanon's fortress -- alone** -- his mission: to destroy the **absorption crystal** and free **Mariana's soul**. But he is thwarted by the sudden return of the **evil Prof. Scotty** -- who manages to ruin the **timer** on the **device** Dennis had given him to destroy the crystal -- and the two end up slugging it out in the cavernous room housing Zanomanon's **diabolical machine**.

At the same time, **Zanomanon**, unable to best **Catherine** in a fair fight, sends his Boot minion **Maggot** to **shoot** her with a **tranquilizer dart** -- thus rendering her **unconscious**.

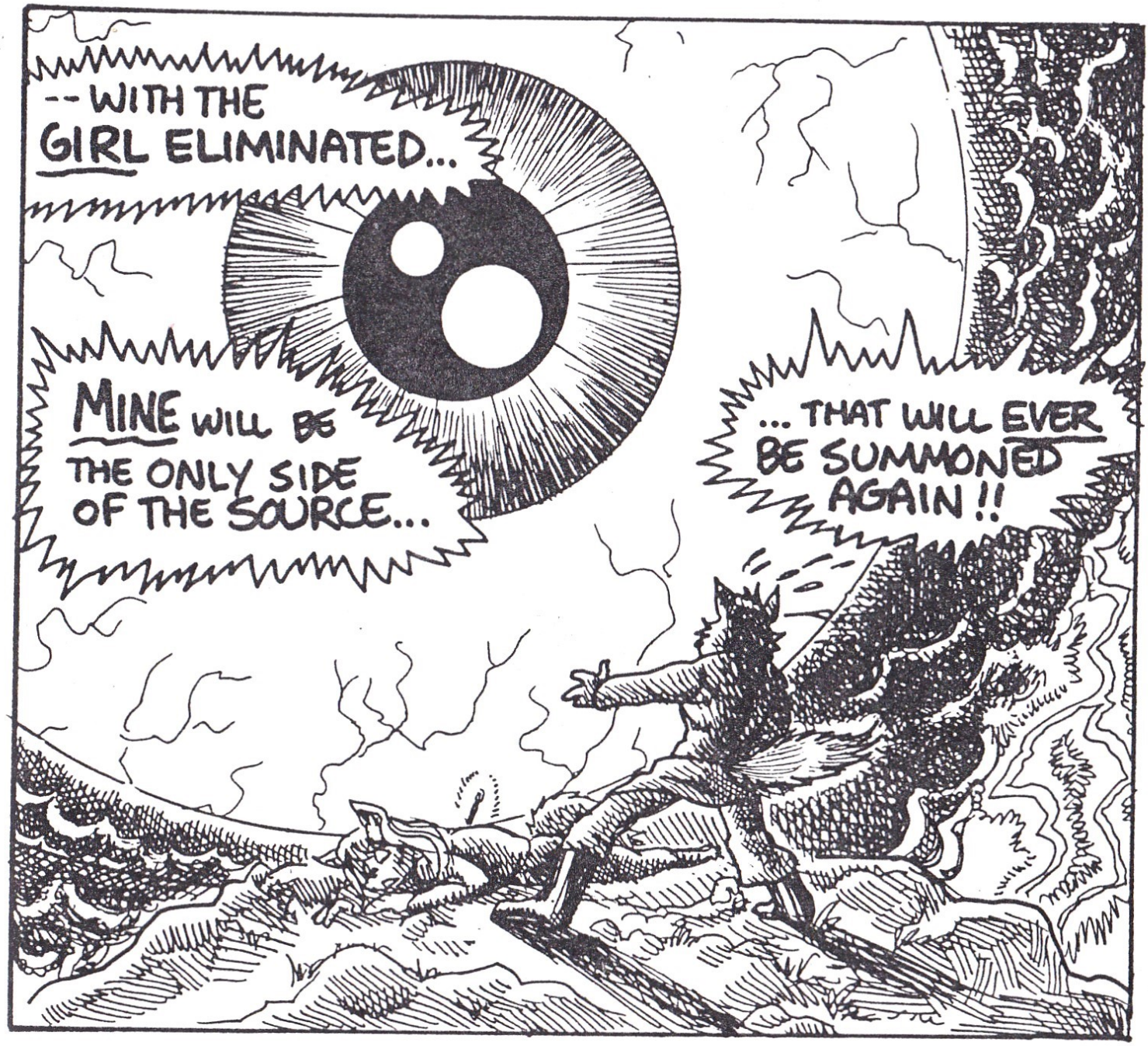
And with **Catherine** out of commission, **Zanomanon** prepares to hurl his **final blow** at her -- and all that stands between her and **certain doom** is -- loyal, valiant, terrified -- **Walter**!

So now, **brace yourselves** for the **final conflict** -- as the music reaches a crashing, violent crescendo -- the curtain rises...and our story **concludes...**!

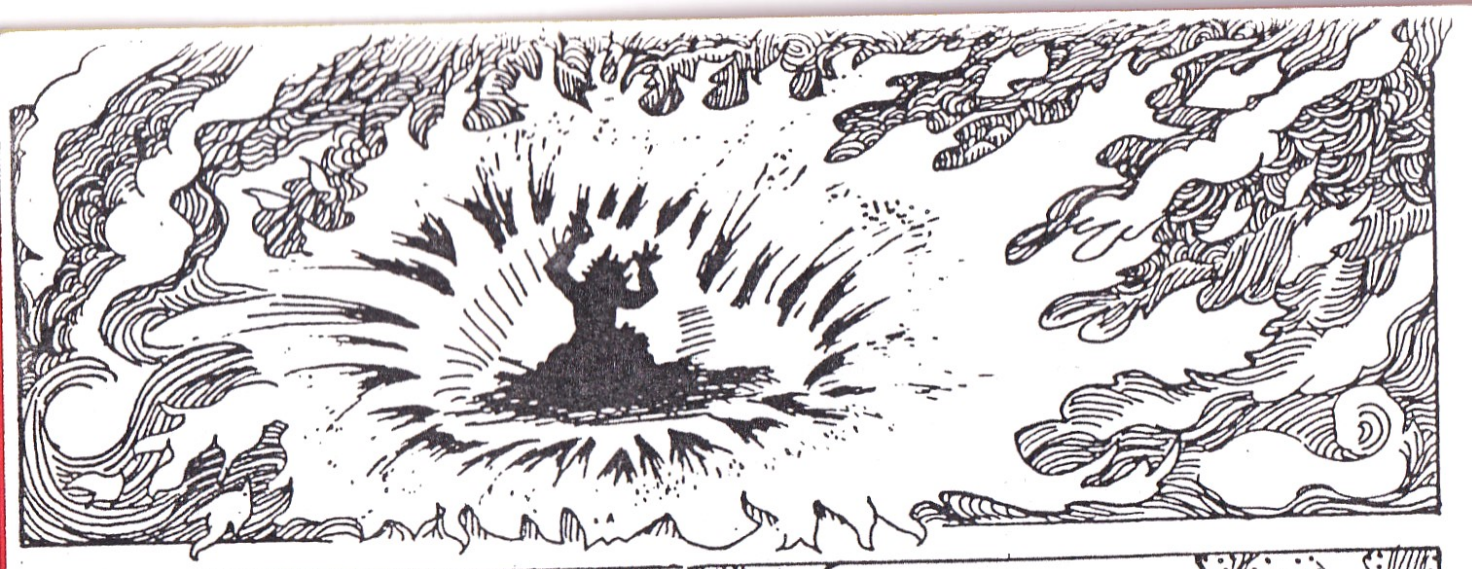
PART TWELVE :

SEEING IS BELIEVING!

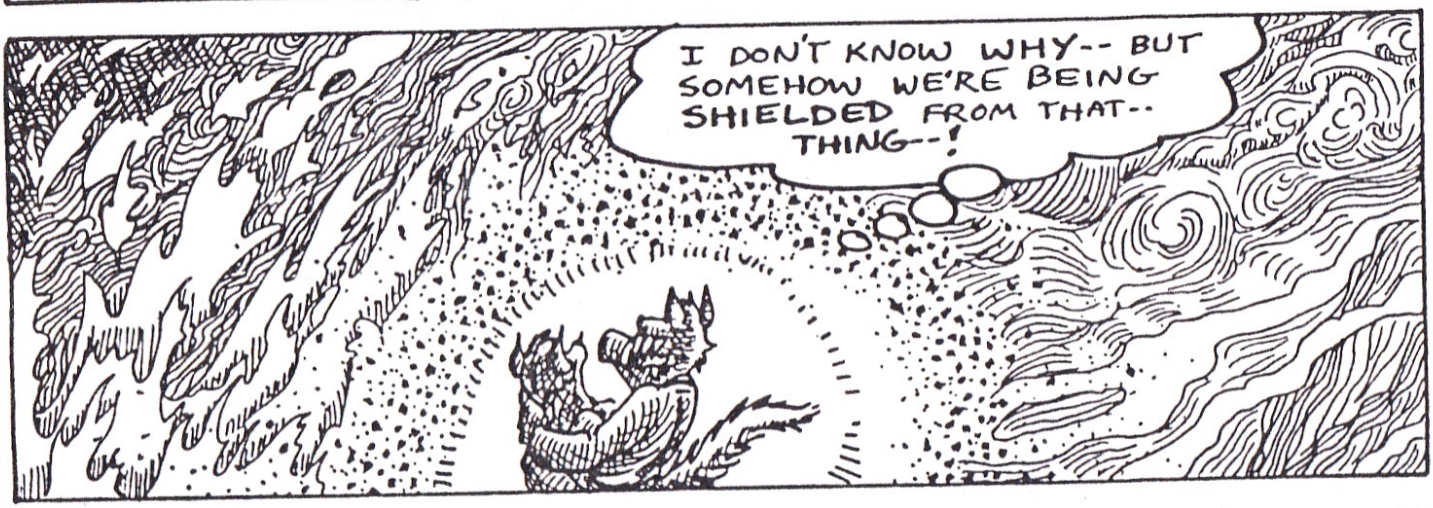
Walter Kitty, Vol 1, No. 16, July 1994, published by AWK COMICS, 2701 Penny Lane, #219, Austin, Texas, 78757-7622. Published approximately quarterly; otherwise, whenever we can. Copyright © 1994 by Mark Shaw. All rights reserved. Price: $3.95 per copy. AAIIEEEE! Walter Kitty, the characters in this comic book and their distinctive likenesses are the property of Mark Shaw, A.K.A. "Uncle" Mark. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, or institutions with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended. Any similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Sorry-- no humorous little messege at the end of the indicia this time, except to say that there **is** no messege this time! We thank you for your support!


--WITH THE GIRL ELIMINATED...
MINE WILL BE THE ONLY SIDE OF THE SOURCE...
...THAT WILL EVER BE SUMMONED AGAIN!!

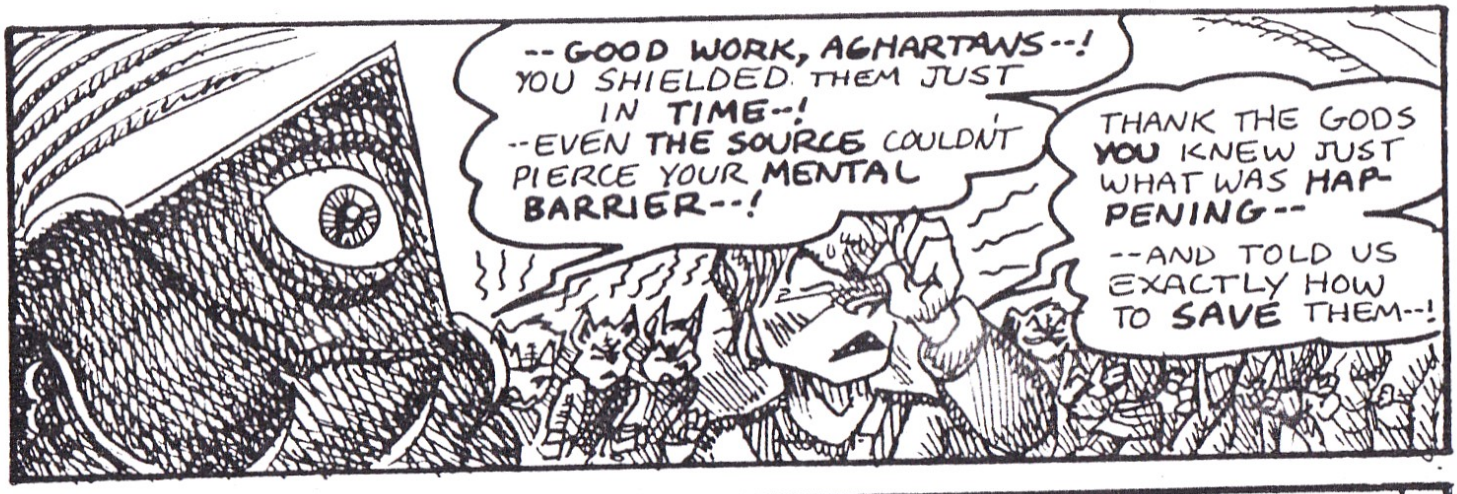
--DIE, FOOLS!
CRZZZ!!
AAAAAAAAAAAA
VOM!

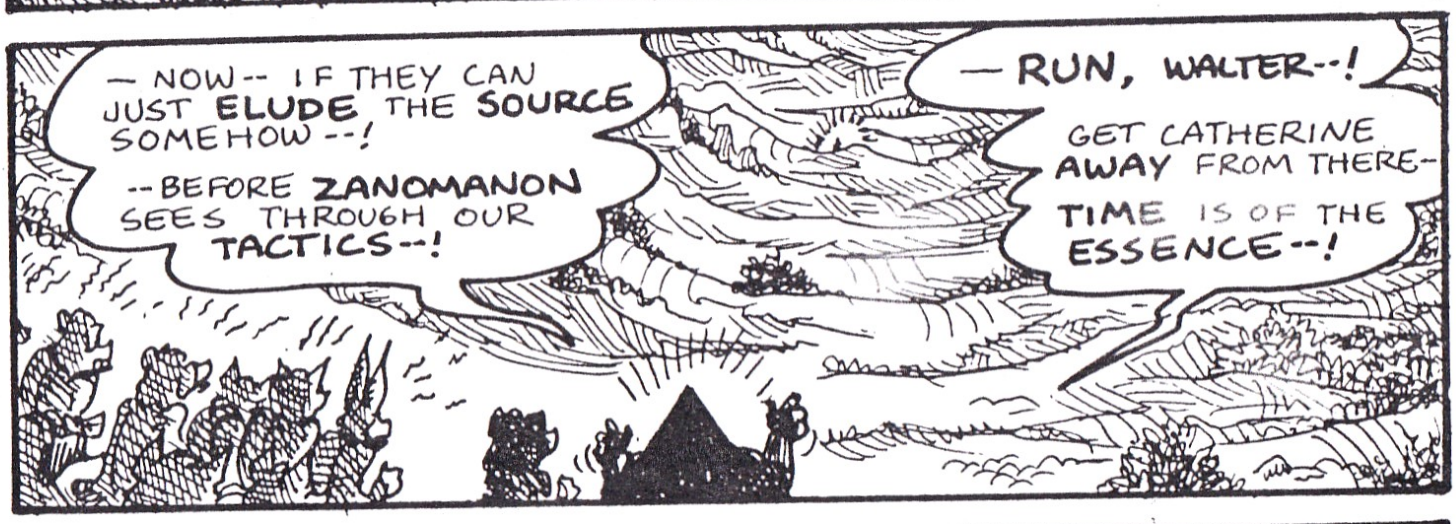


WE-- WE'RE STILL ALIVE--!!


I DON'T KNOW WHY-- BUT SOMEHOW WE'RE BEING SHIELDED FROM THAT-- THING--!

HOWEVER...
--I THINK WE SHOULD DEFINITELY VACATE THE PREMISES--!

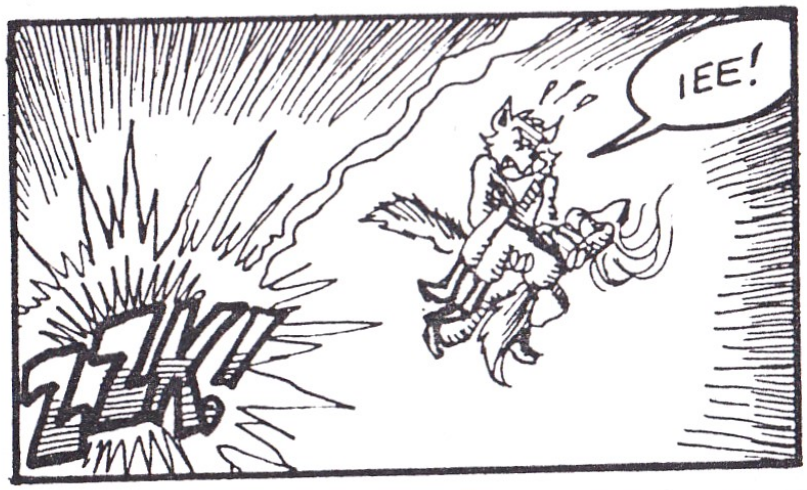

--GOOD WORK, AGHARTANS--! YOU SHIELDED THEM JUST IN TIME--! --EVEN THE SOURCE COULDN'T PIERCE YOUR MENTAL BARRIER--!
THANK THE GODS YOU KNEW JUST WHAT WAS HAPPENING--
--AND TOLD US EXACTLY HOW TO SAVE THEM--!


—NOW-- IF THEY CAN JUST ELUDE THE SOURCE SOMEHOW--!
--BEFORE ZANOMANON SEES THROUGH OUR TACTICS--!
—RUN, WALTER--!
GET CATHERINE AWAY FROM THERE-
TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE--!

PUFF... PUFF!
PANT!
GASP!
HUFF HUFF --

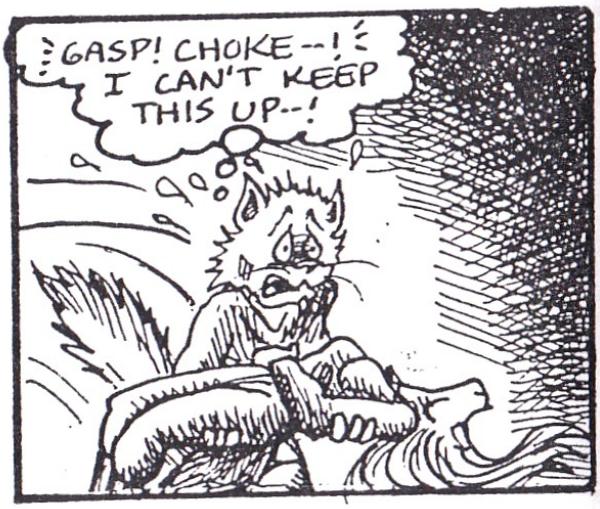
YOW!
ZIK!

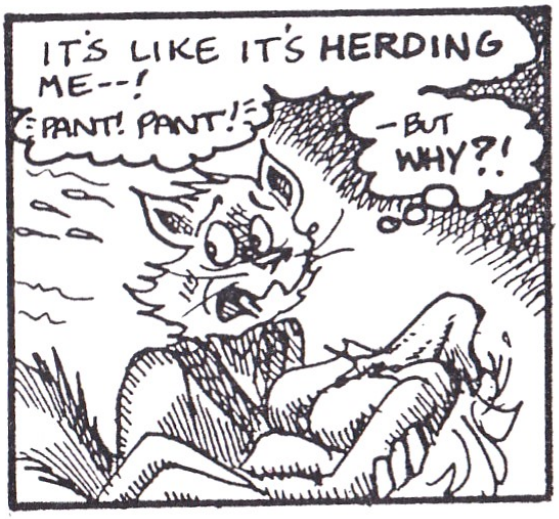
GASP--! WHEEZE!


IEE!
ZZZK!

YIK!
ZZZT!

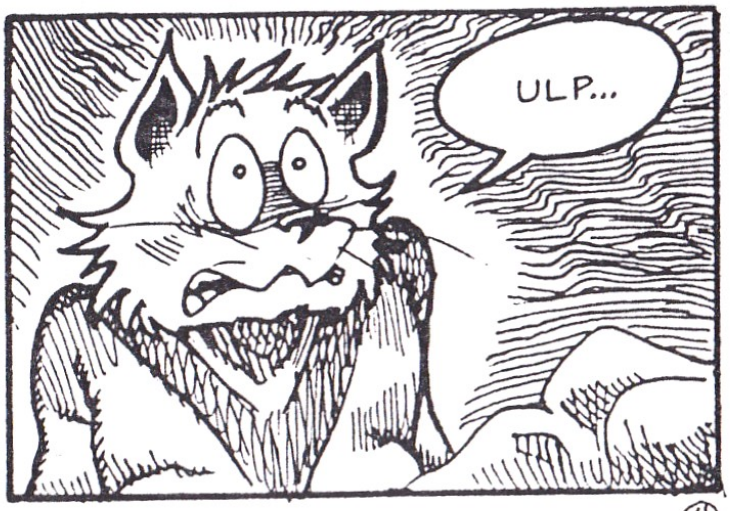
YEEE!
ZZZP!

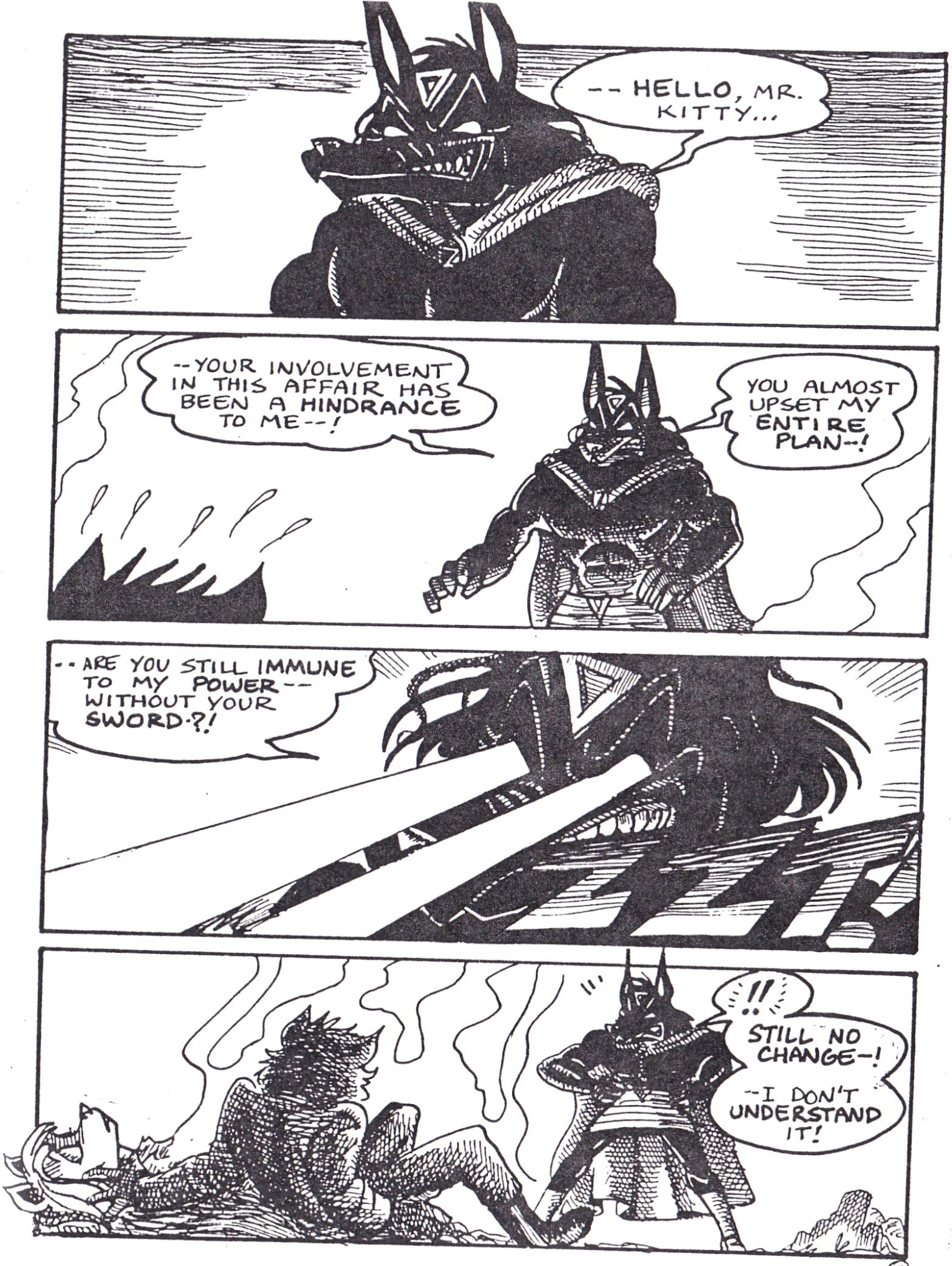

GASP! CHOKE--! I CAN'T KEEP THIS UP--!

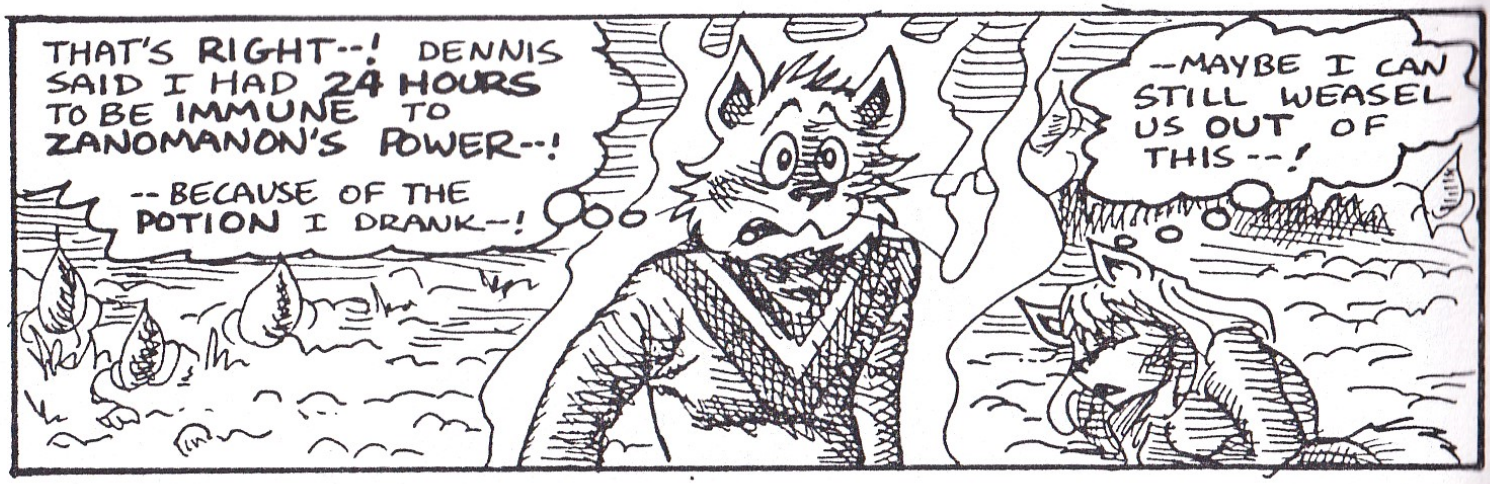

IT'S LIKE IT'S HERDING ME--!
PANT! PANT!
-BUT WHY?!

SPLAT!
UKKK!!

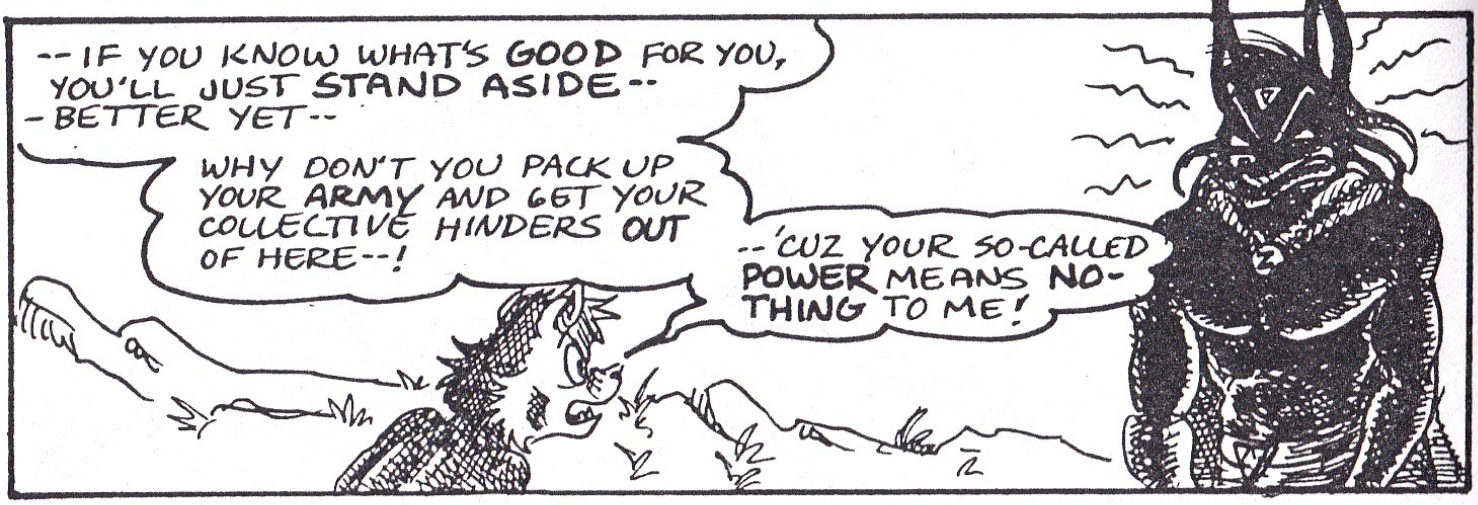
AGH!
WHUMP

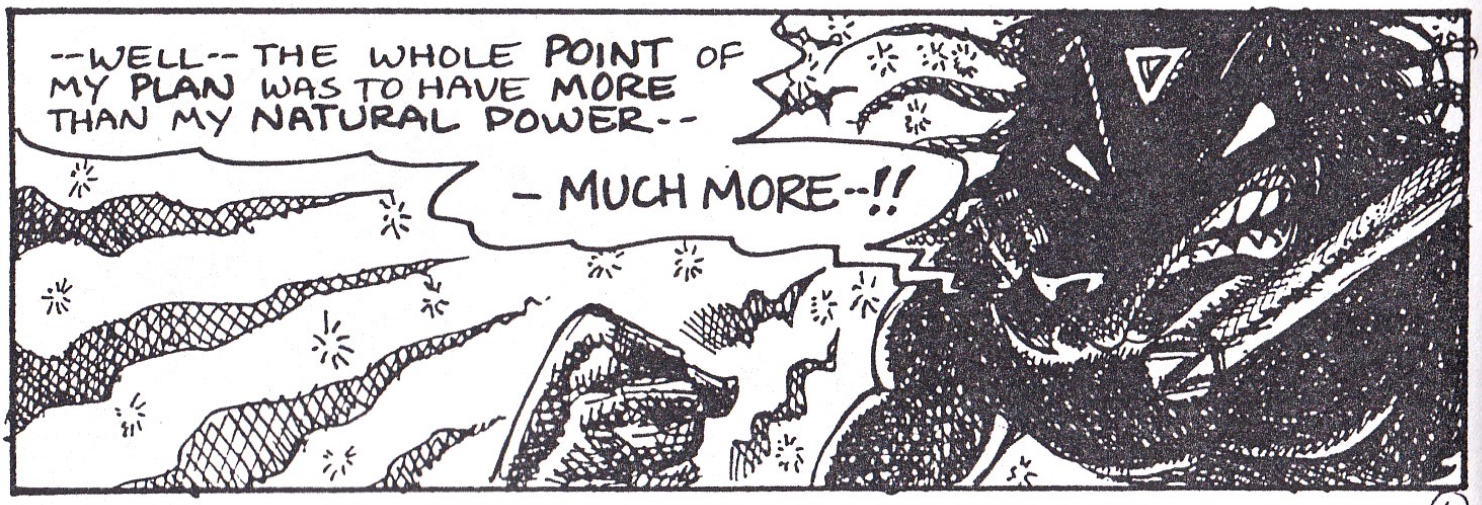

ULP...


-- HELLO, MR. KITTY...
--YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THIS AFFAIR HAS BEEN A HINDRANCE TO ME--!
YOU ALMOST UPSET MY ENTIRE PLAN--!
--ARE YOU STILL IMMUNE TO MY POWER-- WITHOUT YOUR SWORD-?!
!!
STILL NO CHANGE-!
--I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT!

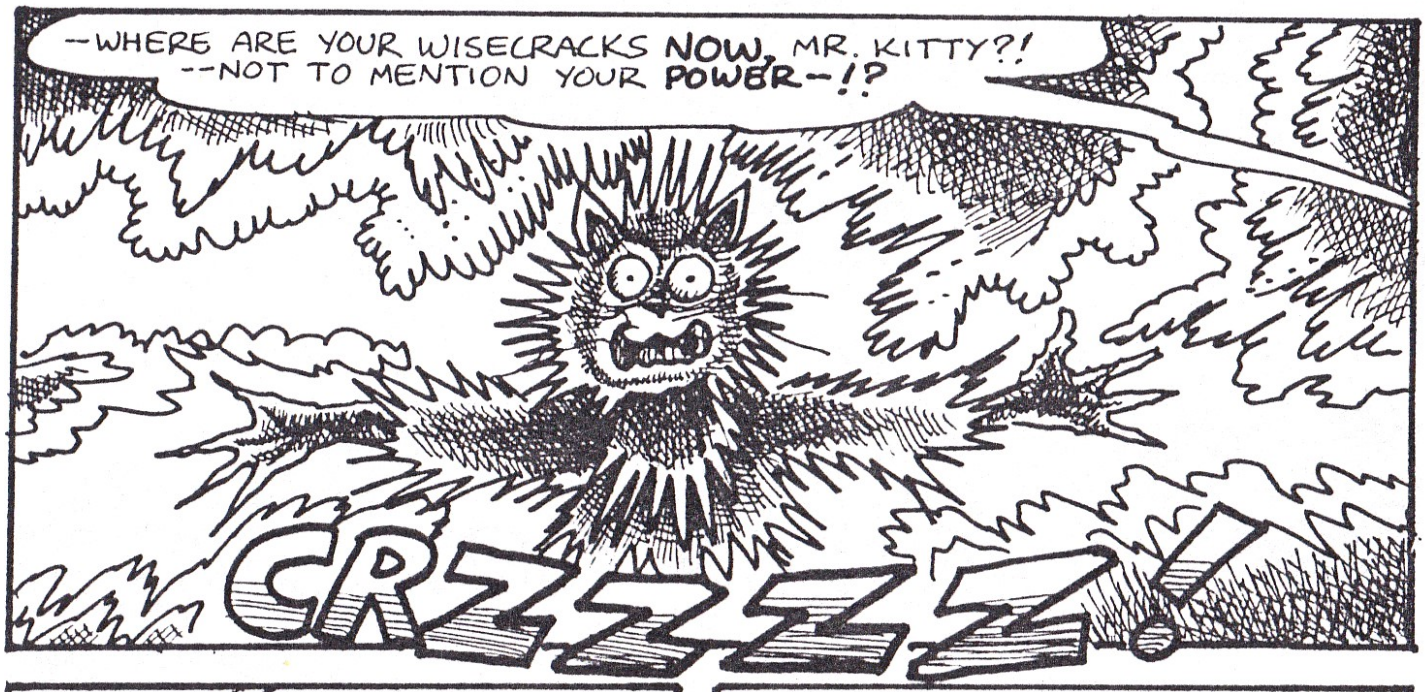

THAT'S RIGHT--! DENNIS SAID I HAD 24 HOURS TO BE IMMUNE TO ZANOMANON'S POWER--!
--BECAUSE OF THE POTION I DRANK--!
--MAYBE I CAN STILL WEASEL US OUT OF THIS--!

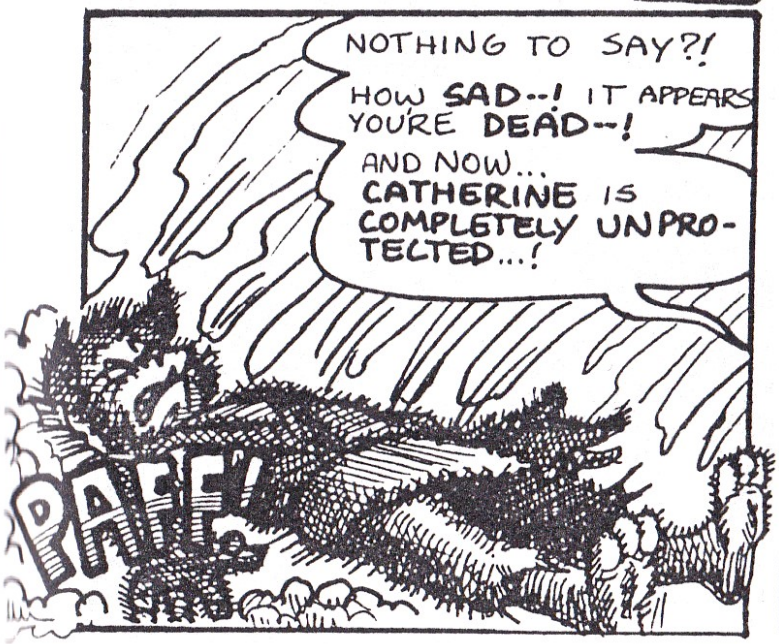
YEAH, YOU CREEP--! YOUR STUPID EYE BEAMS CAN'T AFFECT ME--!

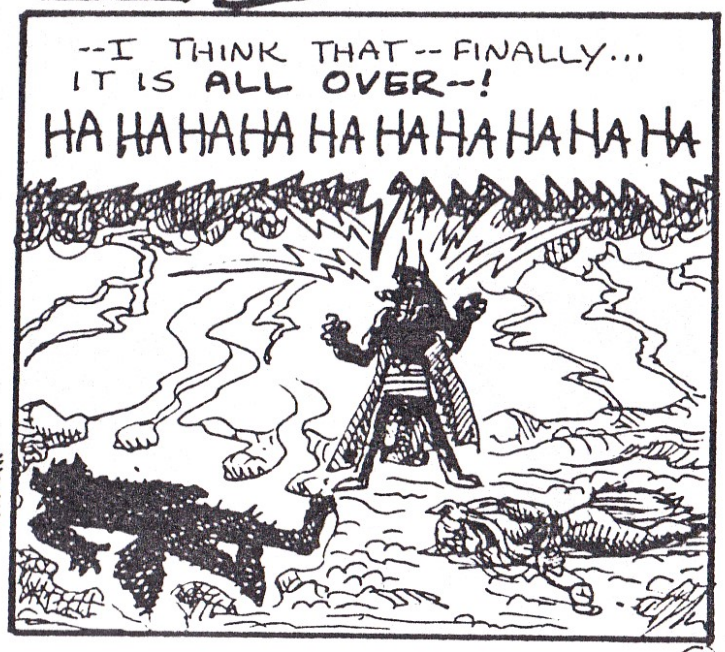

--IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU, YOU'LL JUST STAND ASIDE--
-BETTER YET--
WHY DON'T YOU PACK UP YOUR ARMY AND GET YOUR COLLECTIVE HINDERS OUT OF HERE--!
--'CUZ YOUR SO-CALLED POWER MEANS NO-THING TO ME!

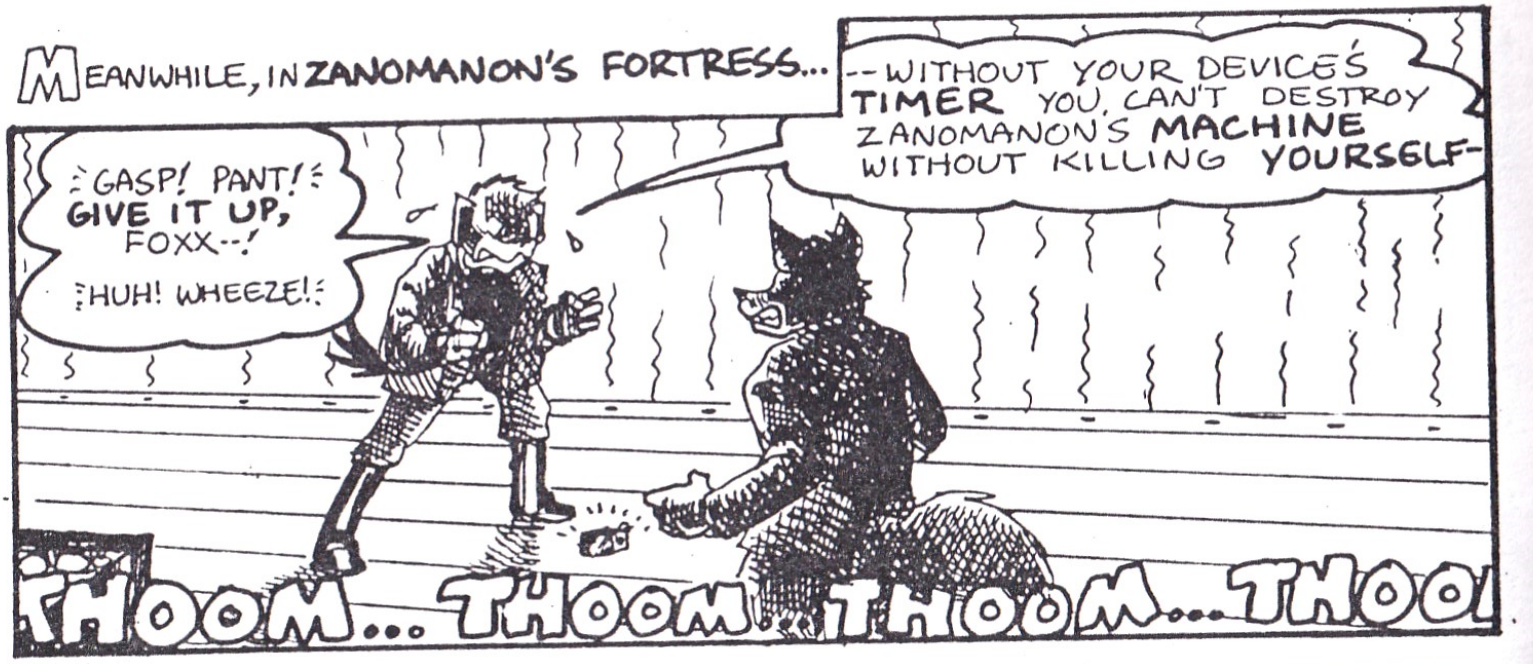

--WELL-- THE WHOLE POINT OF MY PLAN WAS TO HAVE MORE THAN MY NATURAL POWER--
-MUCH MORE--!!

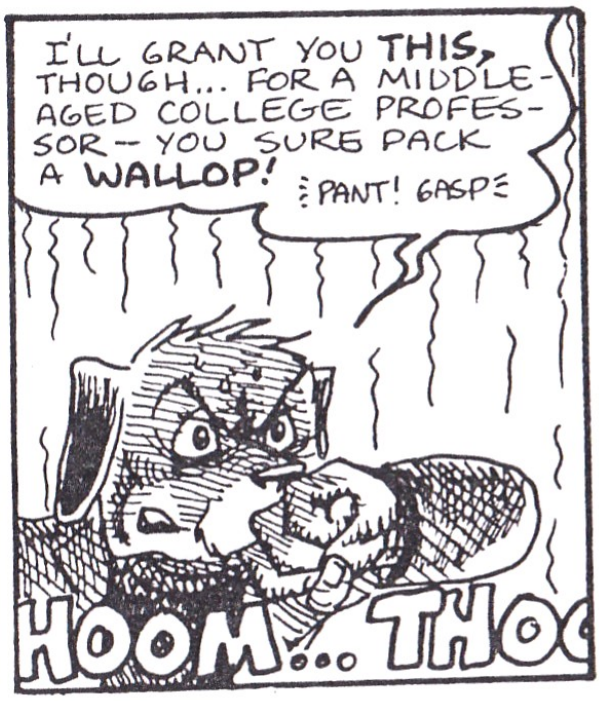
RRRRR
YII!!
ZZZZTT!

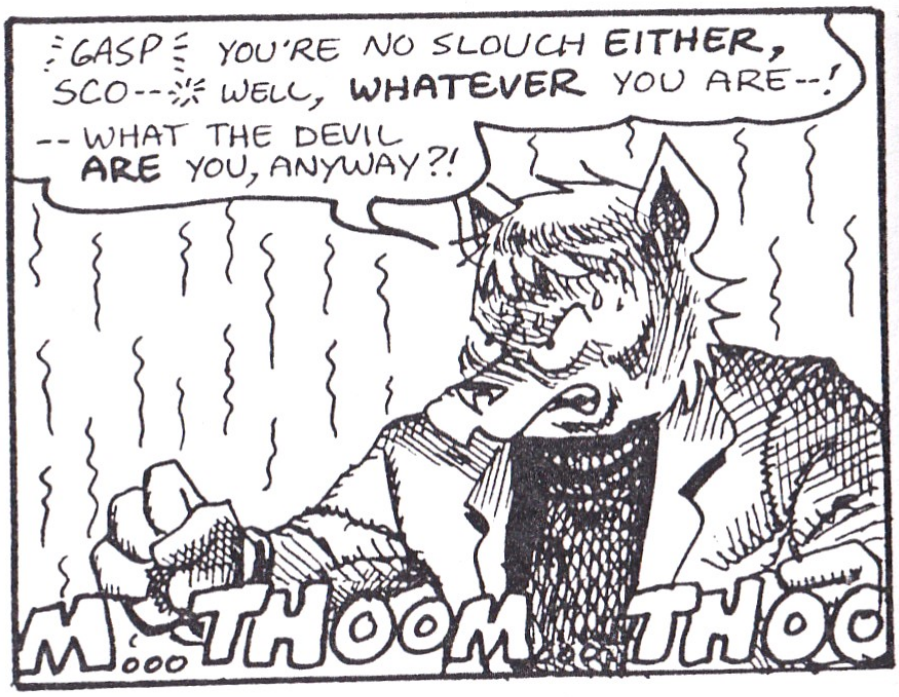

--WHERE ARE YOUR WISECRACKS NOW, MR. KITTY?!
--NOT TO MENTION YOUR POWER--!?
CRZZZZ!

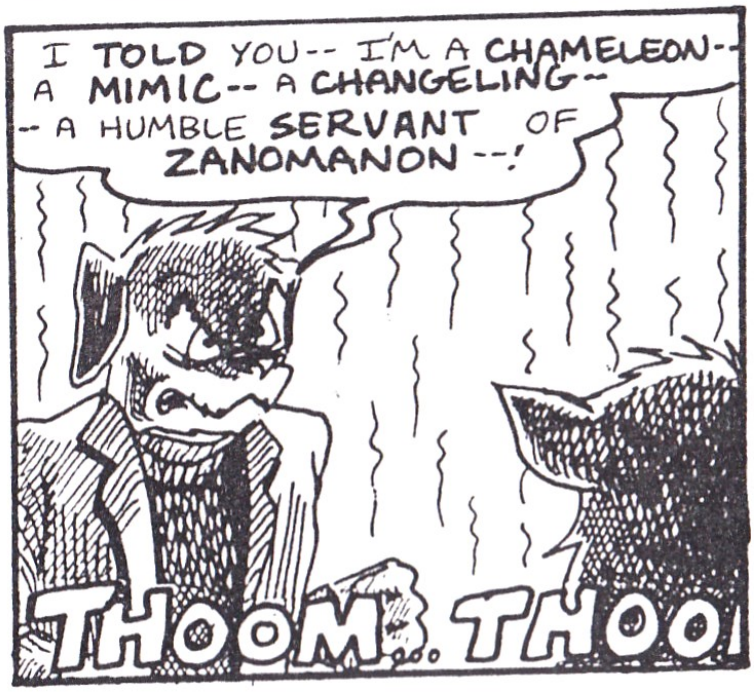

NOTHING TO SAY?!
HOW SAD--! IT APPEARS YOU'RE DEAD--!
AND NOW... CATHERINE IS COMPLETELY UNPROTECTED...!
PAFF!

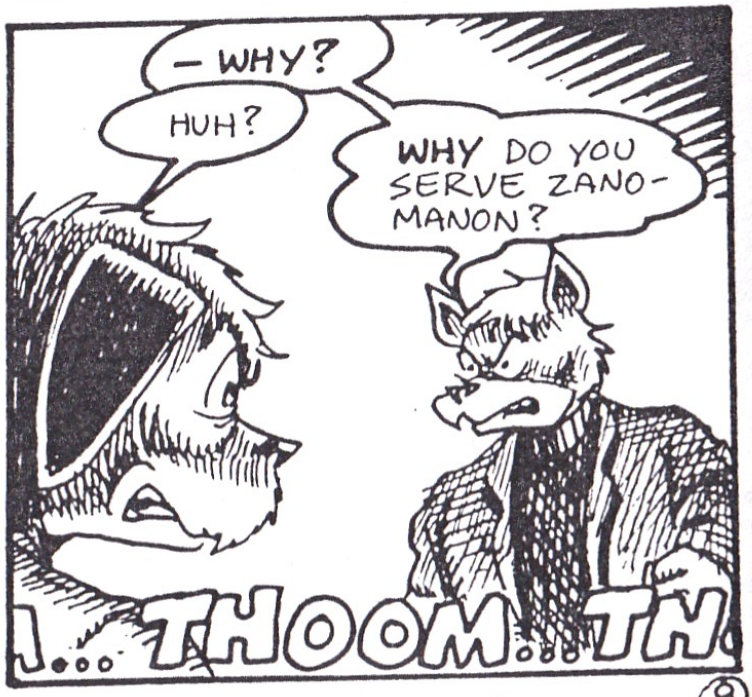

--I THINK THAT--FINALLY... IT IS ALL OVER--!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA

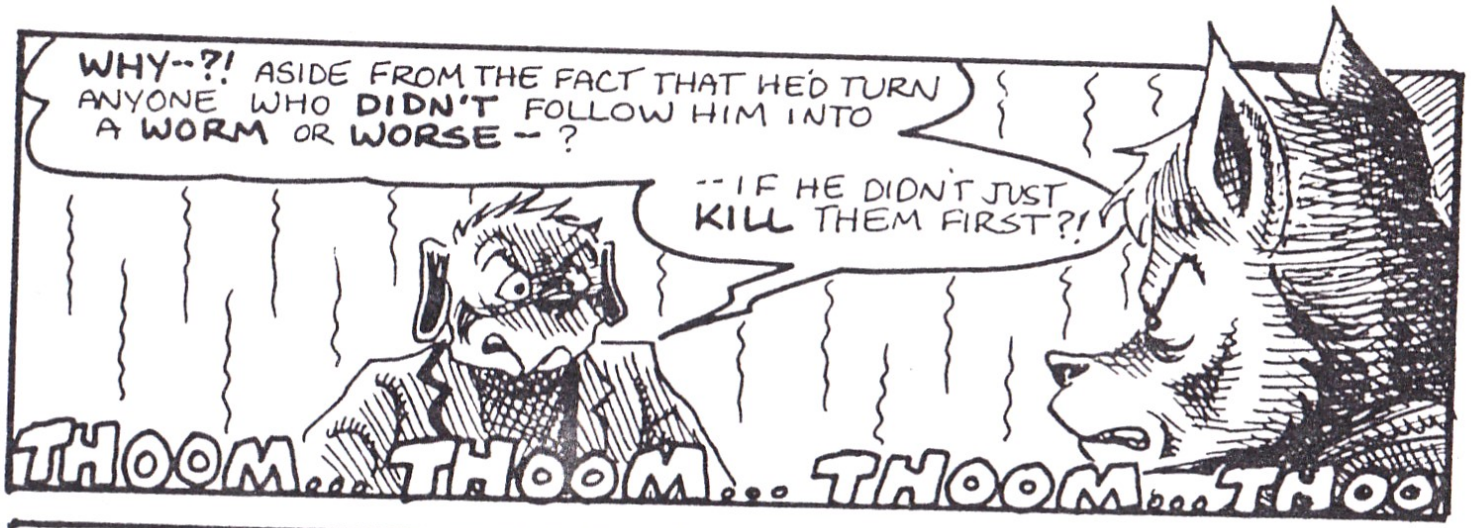

MEANWHILE, IN ZANOMANON'S FORTRESS...
--WITHOUT YOUR DEVICE'S TIMER YOU CAN'T DESTROY ZANOMANON'S MACHINE WITHOUT KILLING YOURSELF-
GASP! PANT! GIVE IT UP, FOXX--!
HUH! WHEEZE!
THOOM... THOOM... THOOM... THOO

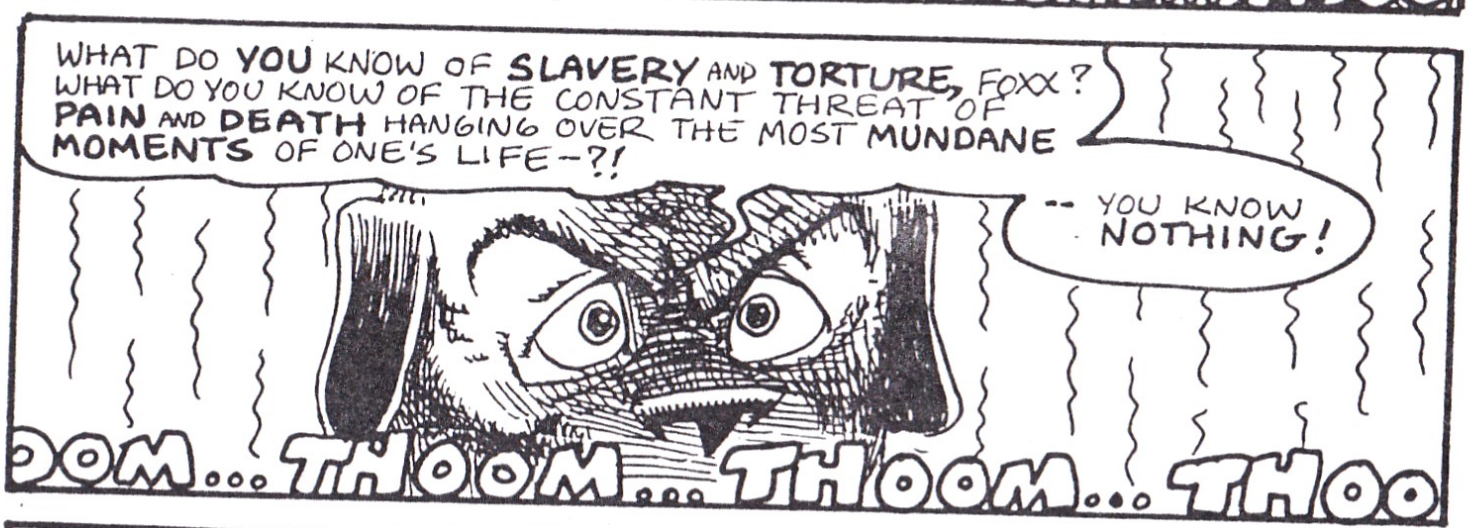

I'LL GRANT YOU THIS, THOUGH... FOR A MIDDLE-AGED COLLEGE PROFESSOR -- YOU SURE PACK A WALLOP!
PANT! GASP
HOOM... THOO

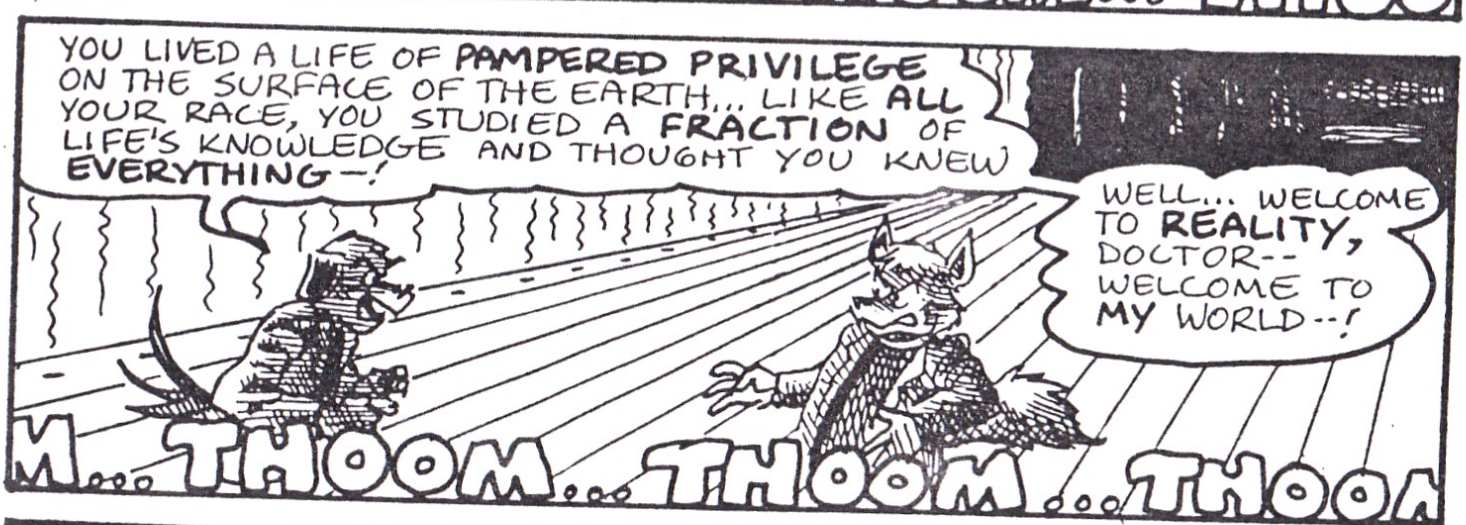

GASP YOU'RE NO SLOUCH EITHER, SCO-- WELL, WHATEVER YOU ARE--!
-- WHAT THE DEVIL ARE YOU, ANYWAY?!
M... THOOM... THOO

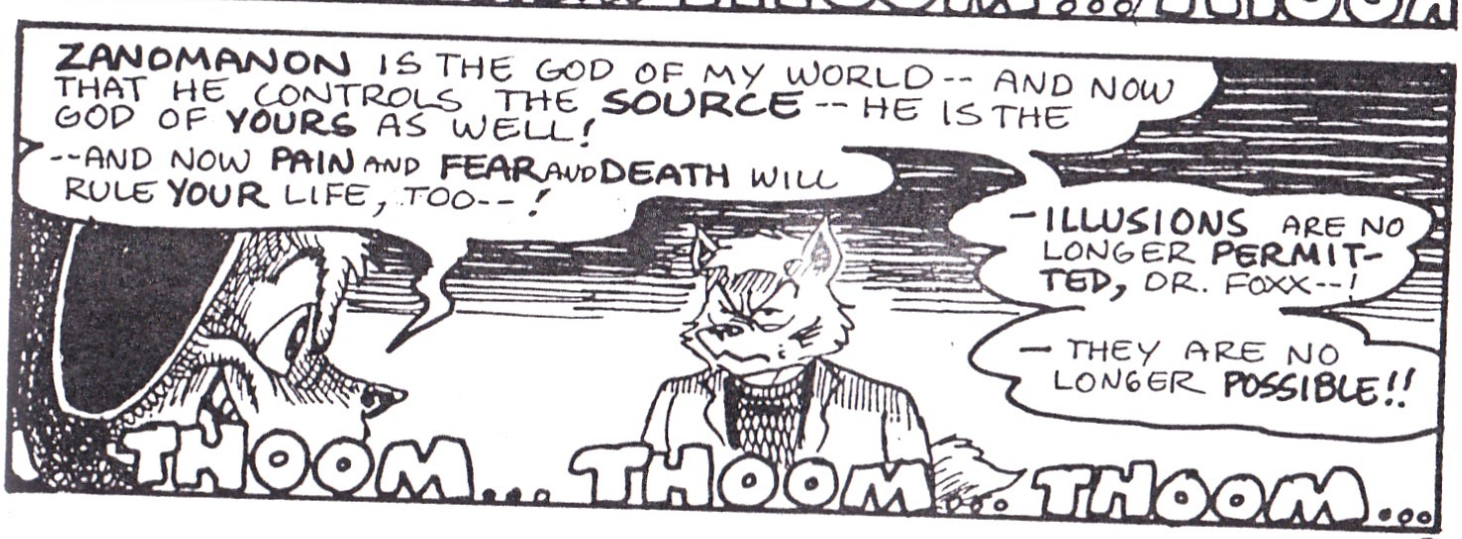

I TOLD YOU-- I'M A CHAMELEON-- A MIMIC-- A CHANGELING-- -- A HUMBLE SERVANT OF ZANOMANON --!
THOOM... THOO

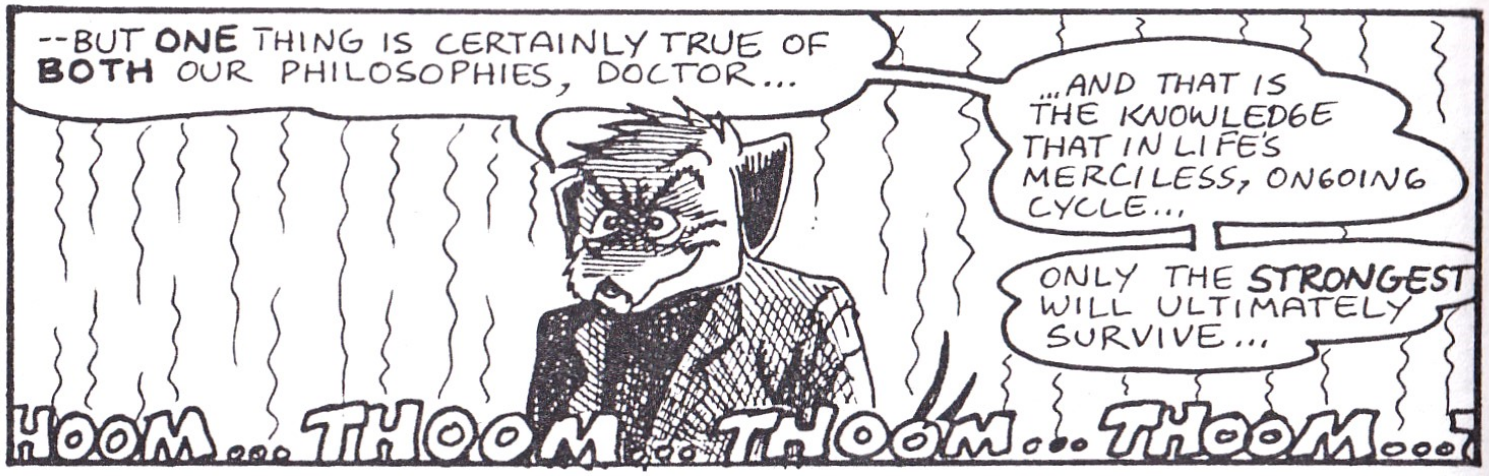

-WHY?
HUH?
WHY DO YOU SERVE ZANOMANON?
... THOOM... TH

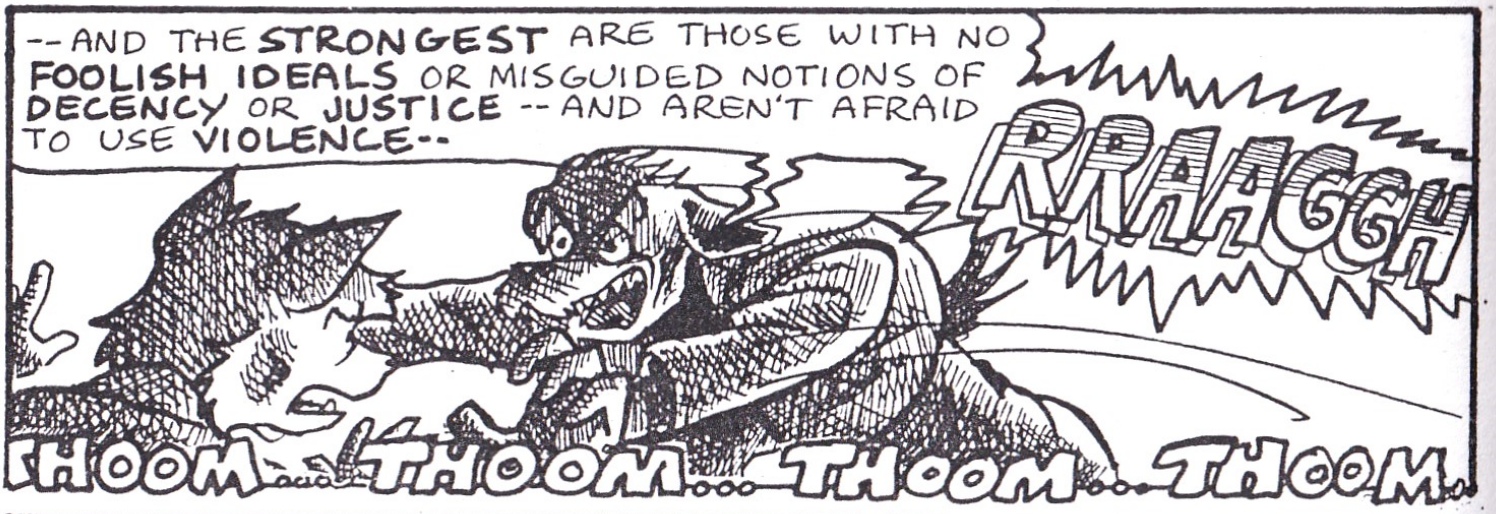

WHY--?! ASIDE FROM THE FACT THAT HE'D TURN ANYONE WHO DIDN'T FOLLOW HIM INTO A WORM OR WORSE--?
--IF HE DIDN'T JUST KILL THEM FIRST?!
THOOM... THOOM... THOOM... THOO

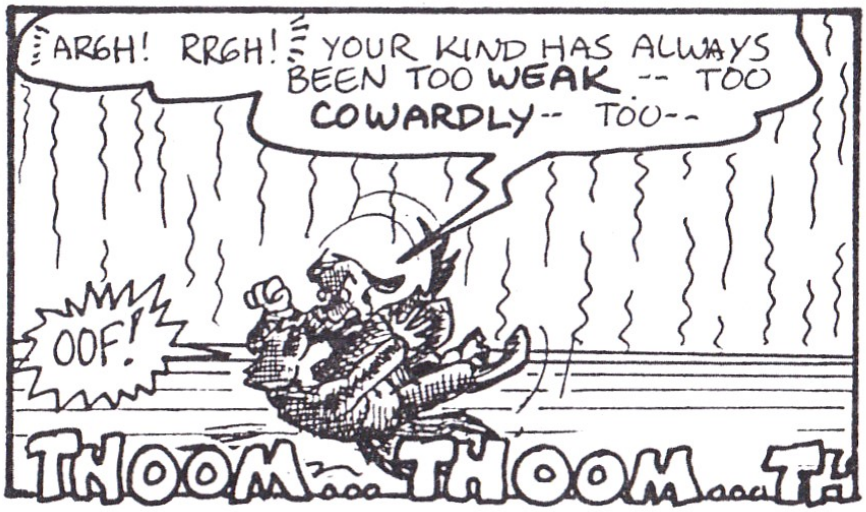

WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF SLAVERY AND TORTURE, FOXX? WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF THE CONSTANT THREAT OF PAIN AND DEATH HANGING OVER THE MOST MUNDANE MOMENTS OF ONE'S LIFE--?!
-- YOU KNOW NOTHING!
OOM... THOOM... THOOM... THOO


YOU LIVED A LIFE OF PAMPERED PRIVILEGE ON THE SURFACE OF THE EARTH... LIKE ALL YOUR RACE, YOU STUDIED A FRACTION OF LIFE'S KNOWLEDGE AND THOUGHT YOU KNEW EVERYTHING--!
WELL... WELCOME TO REALITY, DOCTOR-- WELCOME TO MY WORLD--!
M... THOOM... THOOM... THOOM

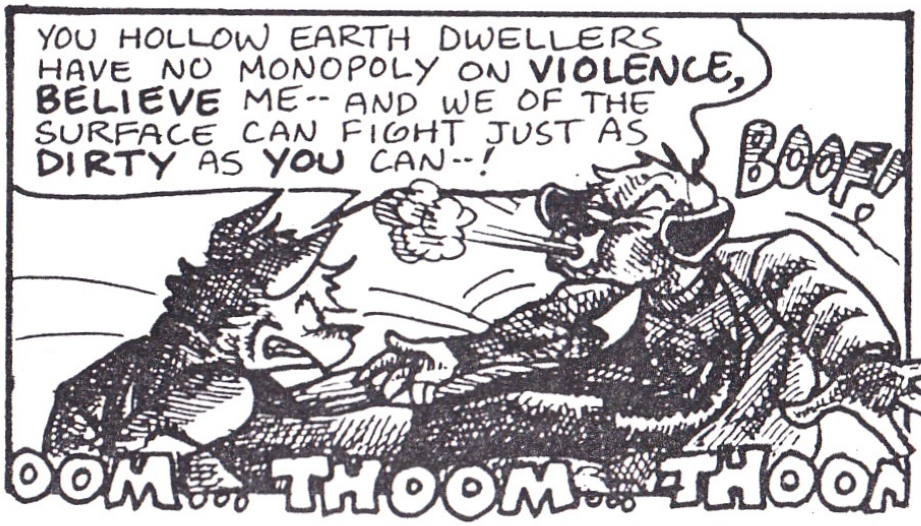

ZANOMANON IS THE GOD OF MY WORLD-- AND NOW THAT HE CONTROLS THE SOURCE-- HE IS THE GOD OF YOURS AS WELL!
--AND NOW PAIN AND FEAR AND DEATH WILL RULE YOUR LIFE, TOO--!
-ILLUSIONS ARE NO LONGER PERMITTED, DR. FOXX--!
-THEY ARE NO LONGER POSSIBLE!!
THOOM... THOOM... THOOM...


--BUT ONE THING IS CERTAINLY TRUE OF BOTH OUR PHILOSOPHIES, DOCTOR...
...AND THAT IS THE KNOWLEDGE THAT IN LIFE'S MERCILESS, ONGOING CYCLE...
ONLY THE STRONGEST WILL ULTIMATELY SURVIVE...
HOOM... THOOM... THOOM... THOOM...

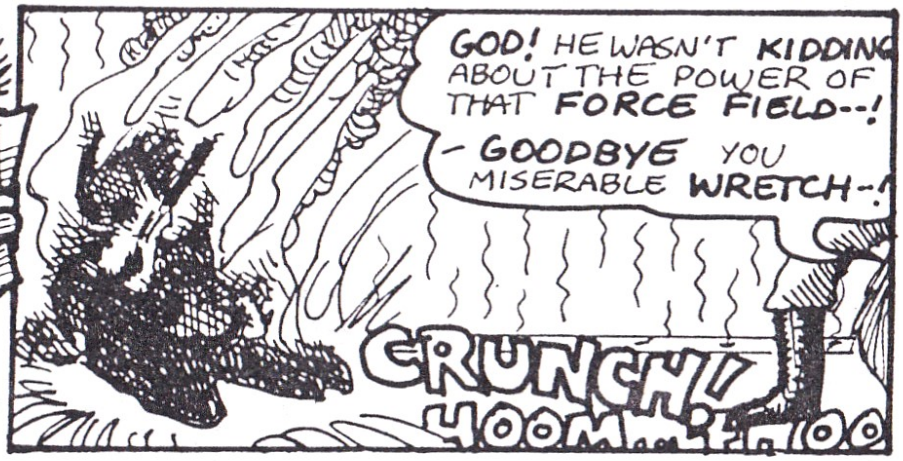

--AND THE STRONGEST ARE THOSE WITH NO FOOLISH IDEALS OR MISGUIDED NOTIONS OF DECENCY OR JUSTICE -- AND AREN'T AFRAID TO USE VIOLENCE--
RRAAGGH
THOOM... THOOM... THOOM... THOOM...

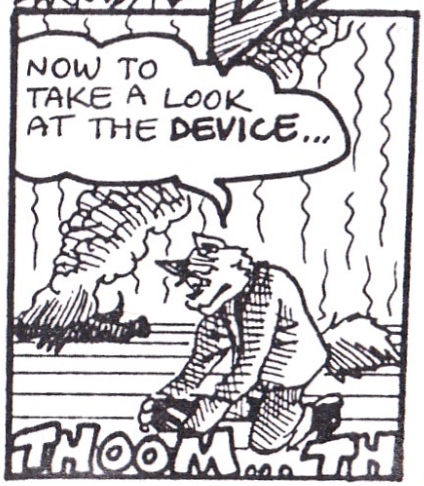

ARGH! RRGH! YOUR KIND HAS ALWAYS BEEN TOO WEAK -- TOO COWARDLY-- TOO--
OOF!
THOOM... THOOM... TH

-- YOU TALK WAY TOO MUCH, YOU IDIOT--!
DOINK
AAAGGH!

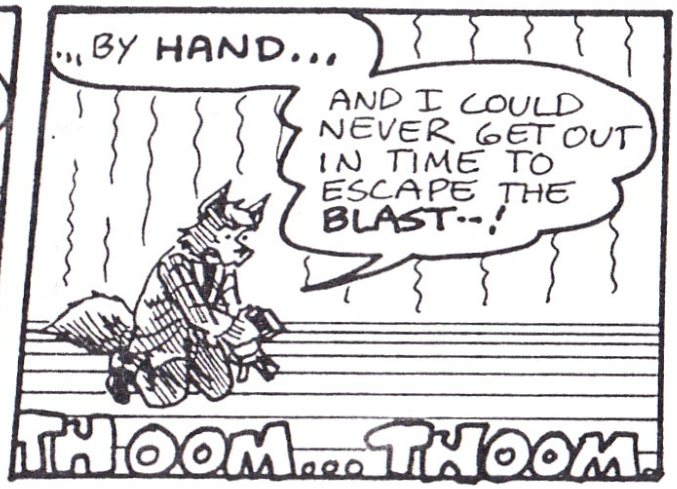

YOU HOLLOW EARTH DWELLERS HAVE NO MONOPOLY ON VIOLENCE, BELIEVE ME-- AND WE OF THE SURFACE CAN FIGHT JUST AS DIRTY AS YOU CAN--!
BOOF!
OOM... THOOM... THOOM

RRGH! --YOU... YOU--
THOOM... THO

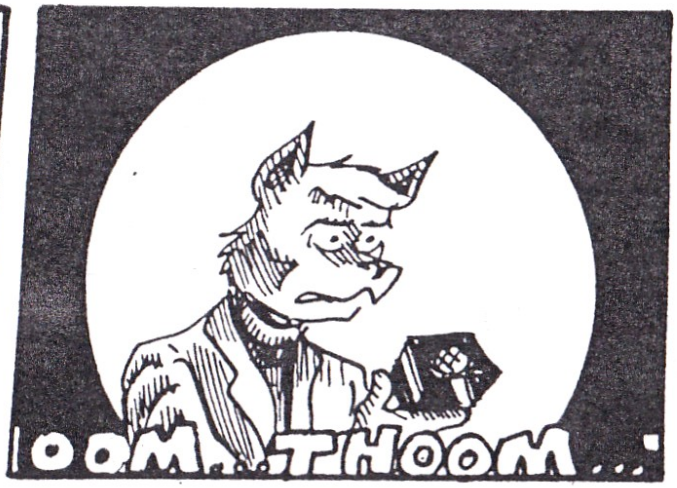

GOD! HE WASN'T KIDDING ABOUT THE POWER OF THAT FORCE FIELD--!
- GOODBYE YOU MISERABLE WRETCH--!
CRUNCH!
HOOM...TH...OO


NOW TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE DEVICE...
THOOM...TH

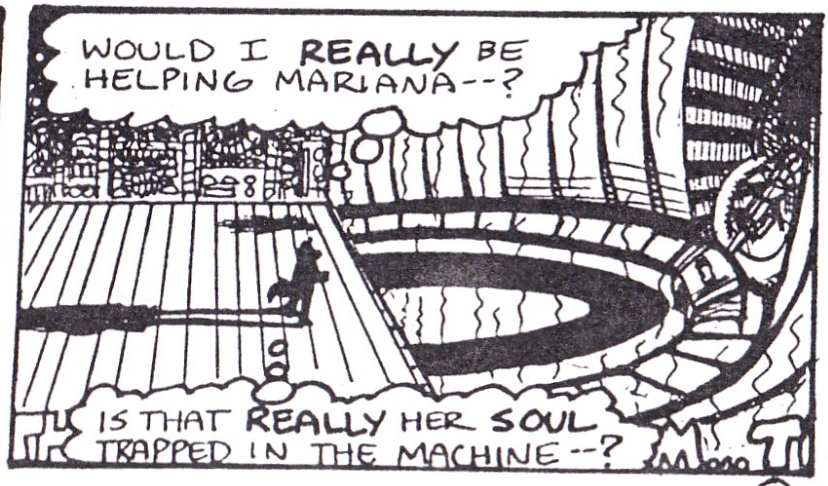
YES, THE TIMER IS RUINED--!
--NOW IT CAN ONLY BE ACTI-VATED...

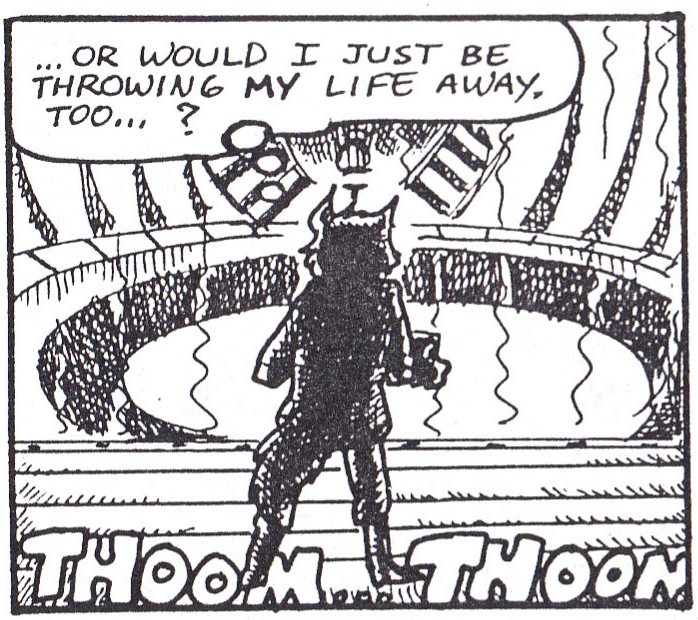

...BY HAND...
AND I COULD NEVER GET OUT IN TIME TO ESCAPE THE BLAST--!
TH OOM... THOOM.

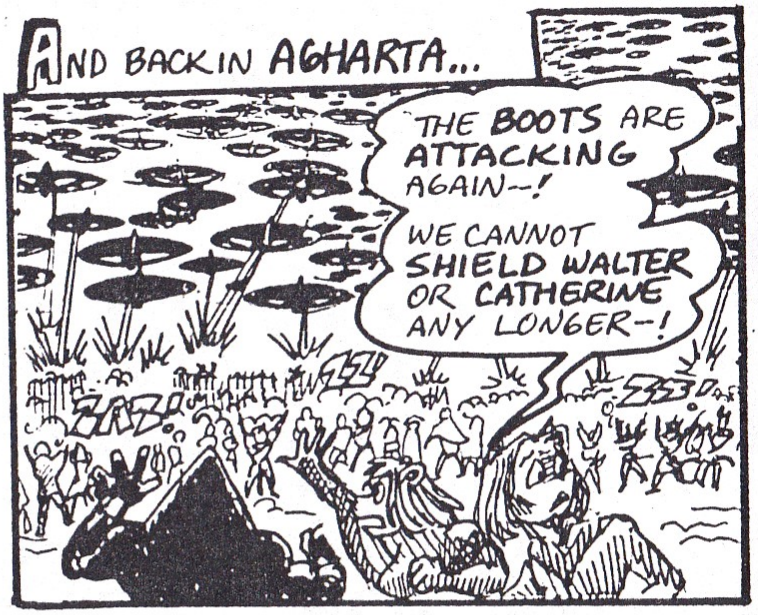
I WOULD BE DESTROYED ALONG WITH THE FORTRESS...
...AND THE CRYSTAL...
HOOM...THOOM...T

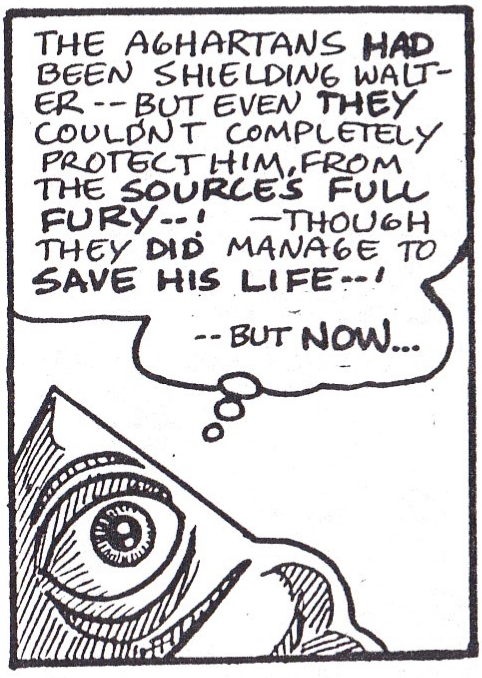

OOM...THOOM...

OOM...THOOM...

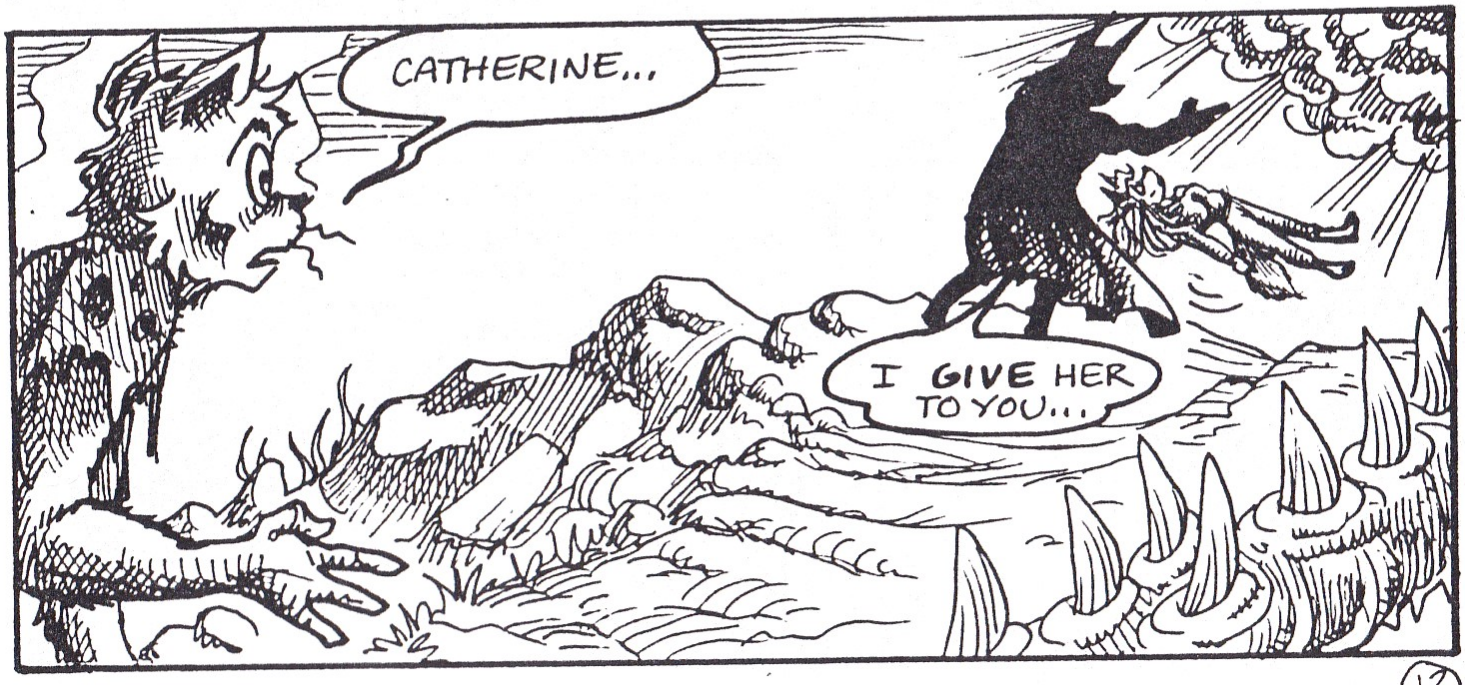

WOULD I REALLY BE HELPING MARIANA--?
IS THAT REALLY HER SOUL TRAPPED IN THE MACHINE--?
M...T

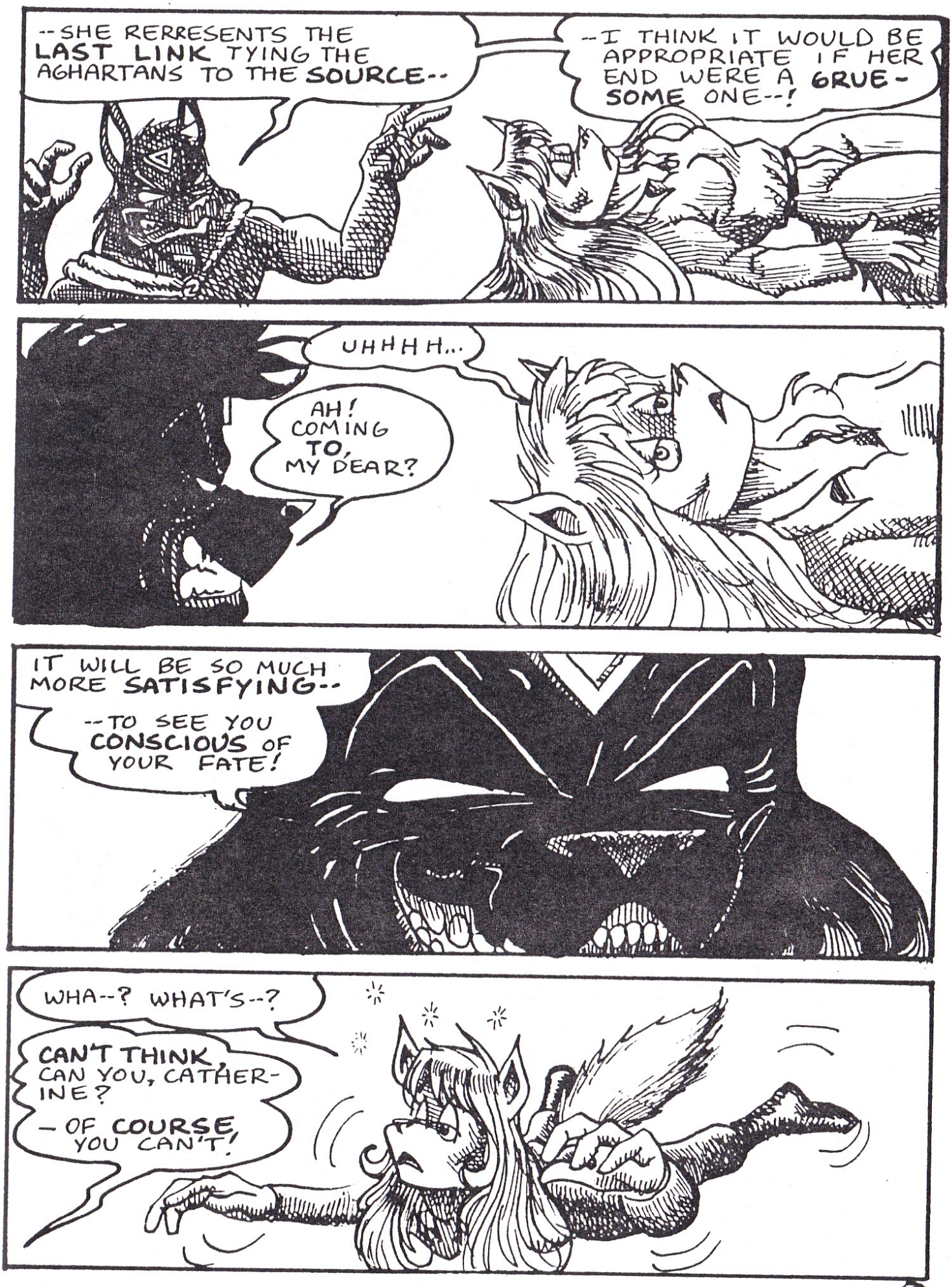

...OR WOULD I JUST BE THROWING MY LIFE AWAY, TOO... ?
THOOM... THOOM

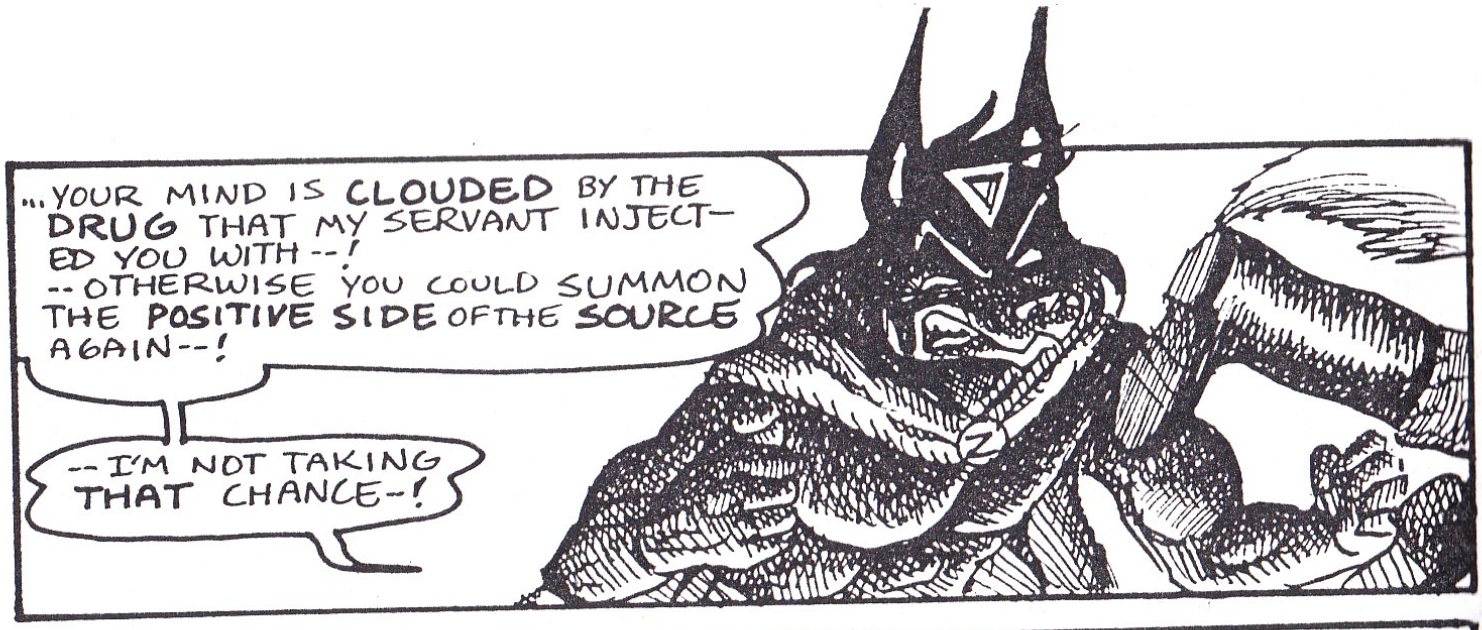

AND BACK IN AGHARTA...
THE BOOTS ARE ATTACKING AGAIN--!
WE CANNOT SHIELD WALTER OR CATHERINE ANY LONGER--!

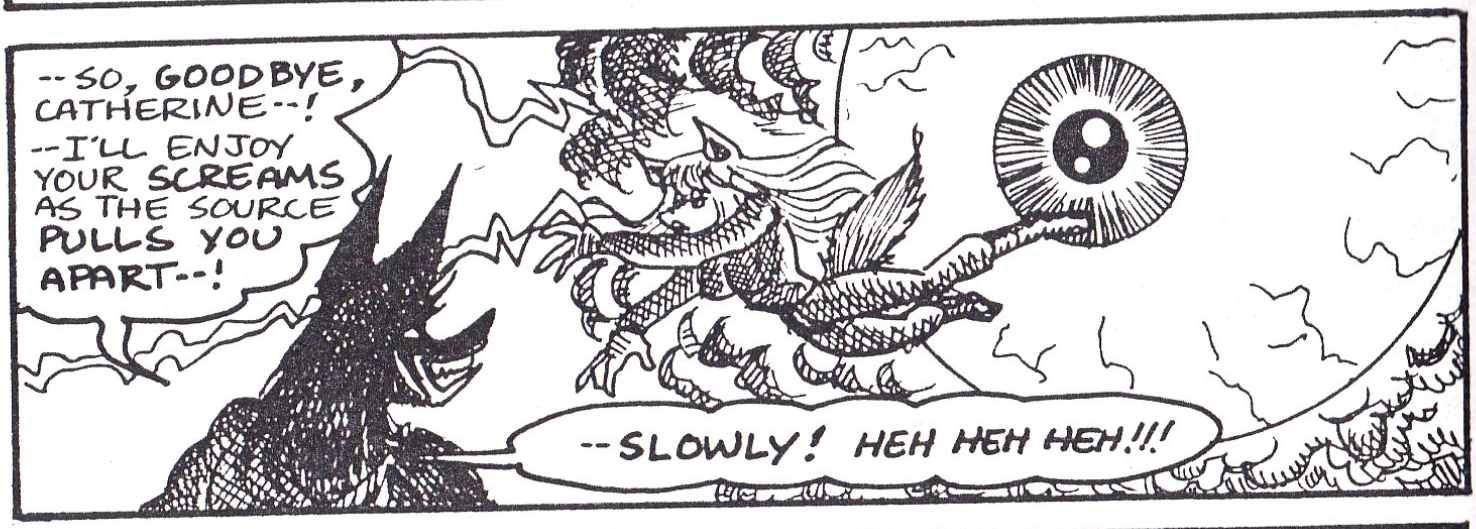

THE AGHARTANS HAD BEEN SHIELDING WALTER -- BUT EVEN THEY COULDN'T COMPLETELY PROTECT HIM, FROM THE SOURCE'S FULL FURY--! —THOUGH THEY DID MANAGE TO SAVE HIS LIFE--!
-- BUT NOW...

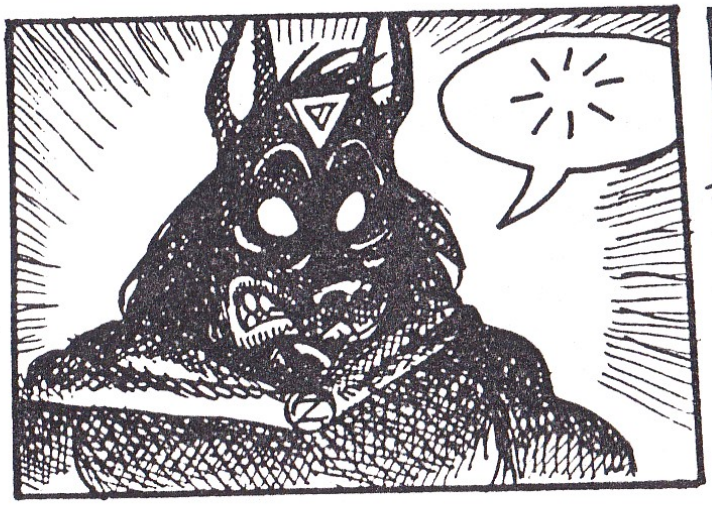
"...NOW, HE'S ON HIS OWN...!"
COUGH-- COUGH
GASP-- CHOKE--!
--I'M STILL ALIVE!
-I FEEL DEAD--!


CATHERINE...
I GIVE HER TO YOU...

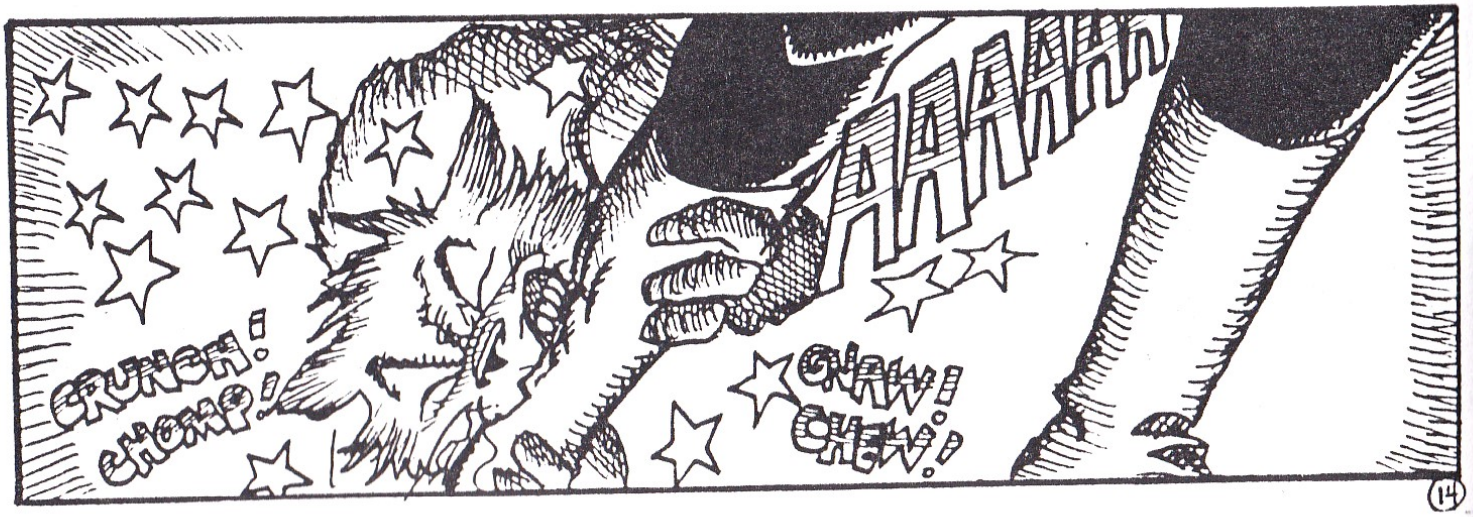

--SHE RERRESENTS THE LAST LINK TYING THE AGHARTANS TO THE SOURCE--
--I THINK IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE IF HER END WERE A GRUE-SOME ONE--!
UHHHH...
AH! COMING TO, MY DEAR?
IT WILL BE SO MUCH MORE SATISFYING--
--TO SEE YOU CONSCIOUS OF YOUR FATE!
WHA--? WHAT'S--?
CAN'T THINK, CAN YOU, CATHERINE?
- OF COURSE, YOU CAN'T!

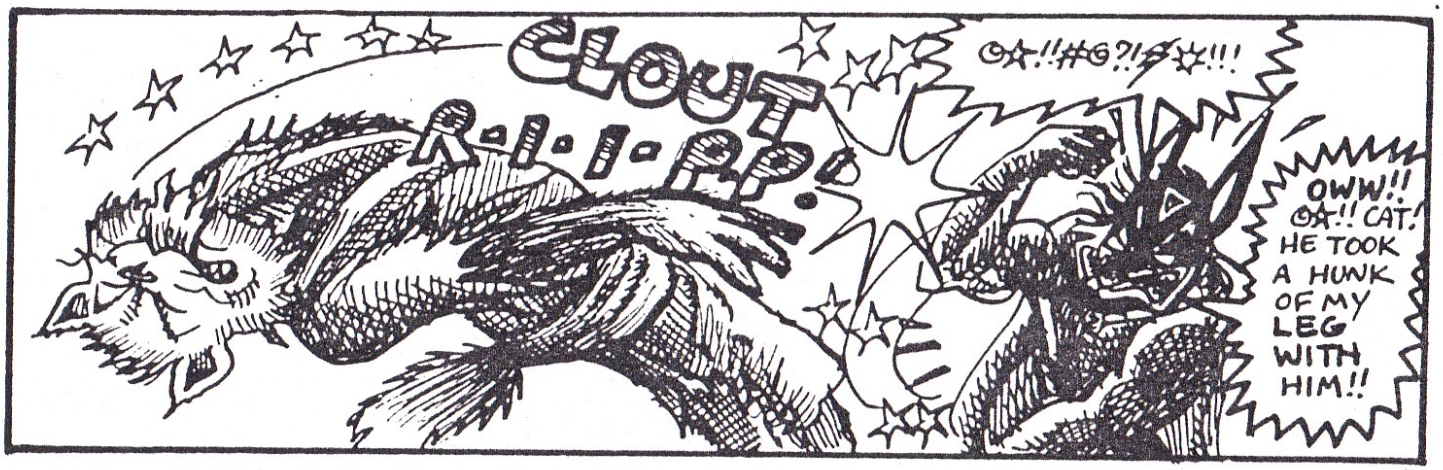

...YOUR MIND IS CLOUDED BY THE DRUG THAT MY SERVANT INJECTED YOU WITH--! --OTHERWISE YOU COULD SUMMON THE POSITIVE SIDE OF THE SOURCE AGAIN--!
--I'M NOT TAKING THAT CHANCE--!

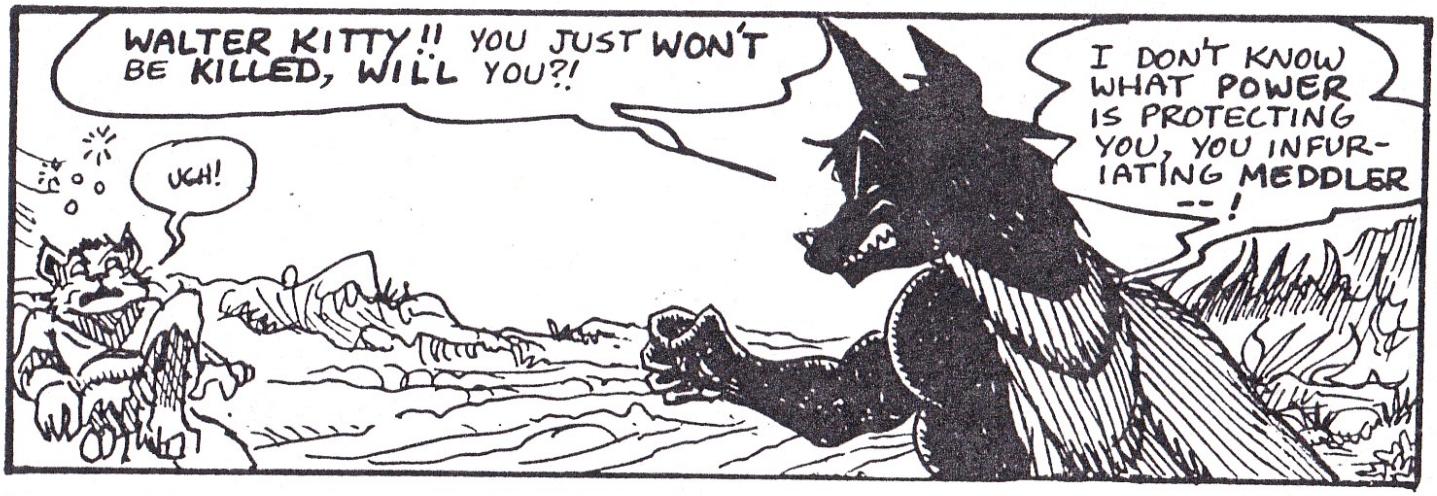

--SO, GOODBYE, CATHERINE--! --I'LL ENJOY YOUR SCREAMS AS THE SOURCE PULLS YOU APART--!
--SLOWLY! HEH HEH HEH!!!



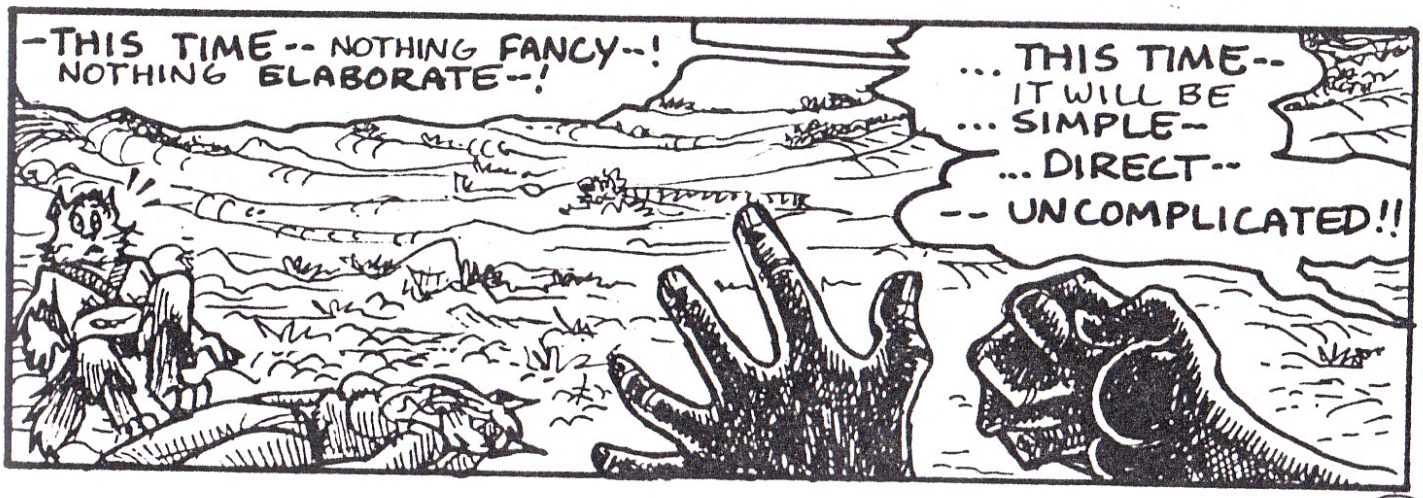
AAAAAA

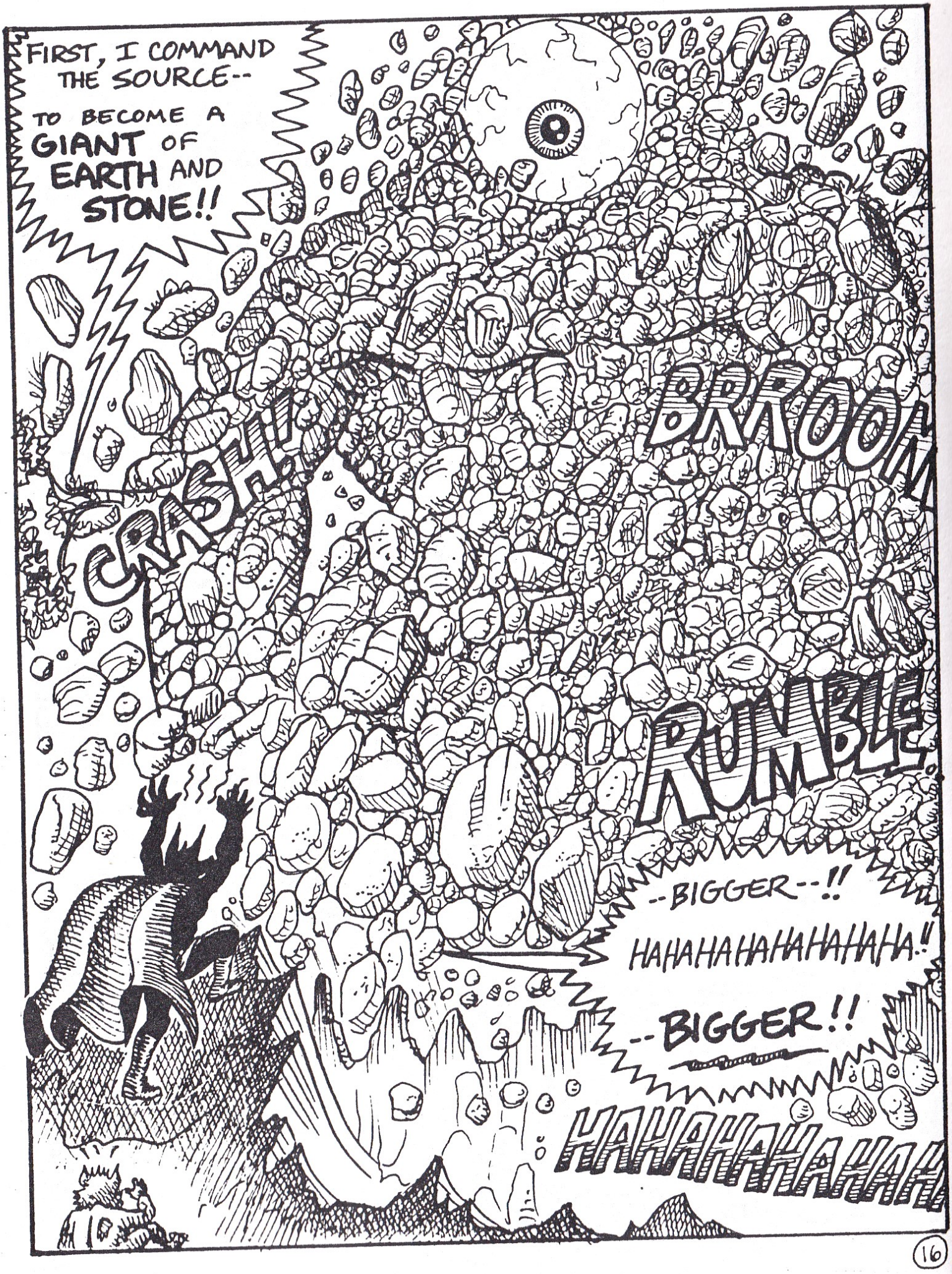

CRUNCH!
CHOMP!
AAAAAA
GNAW!
CHEW!


CLOUT
R-I-I-P!
OWW!! CAT! HE TOOK A HUNK OF MY LEG WITH HIM!!

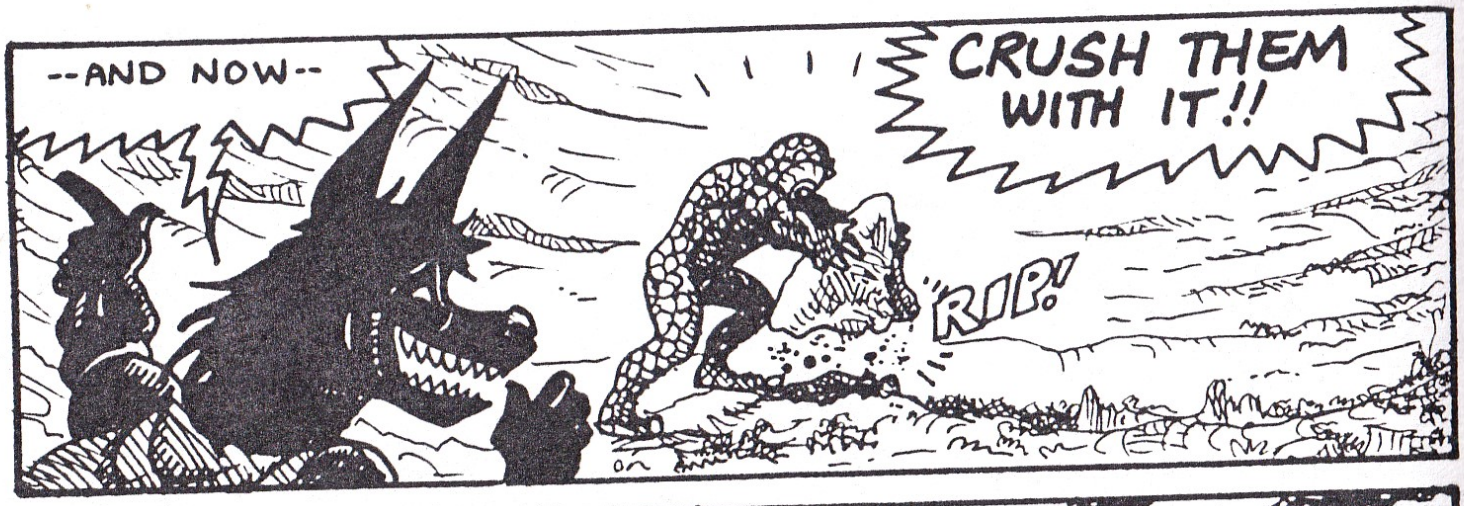

WALTER KITTY!! YOU JUST WON'T BE KILLED, WILL YOU?!
UGH!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT POWER IS PROTECTING YOU, YOU INFURIATING MEDDLER --!

--BUT THIS TIME, YOUR LUCK HAS RUN OUT--!!
UHH!
--YOU WANTED CATHERINE DIDN'T YOU, MR. KITTY--?
--TAKE HER!!

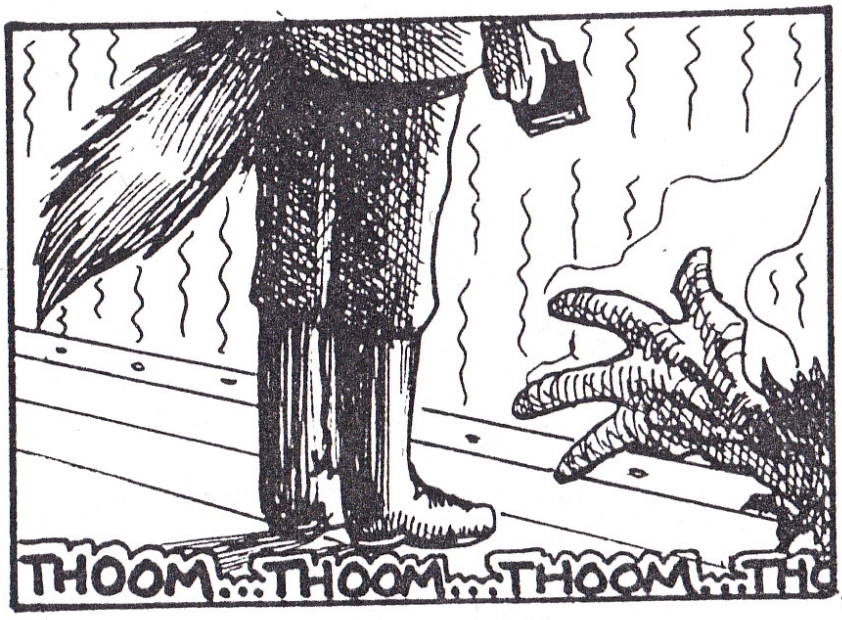

--THIS TIME-- NOTHING FANCY--! NOTHING ELABORATE--!
... THIS TIME-- IT WILL BE ... SIMPLE-- ... DIRECT-- -- UNCOMPLICATED!!


FIRST, I COMMAND THE SOURCE--
TO BECOME A GIANT OF EARTH AND STONE!!
CRASH!
BRROOM
RUMBLE
--BIGGER--!!
HAHAHAHAHAHAHA!!
--BIGGER!!
HAHAHAHAHAH

NOW, GRAB THAT MOUNTAIN OVER THERE--!
...YES, THE WHOLE MOUNTAIN--!!

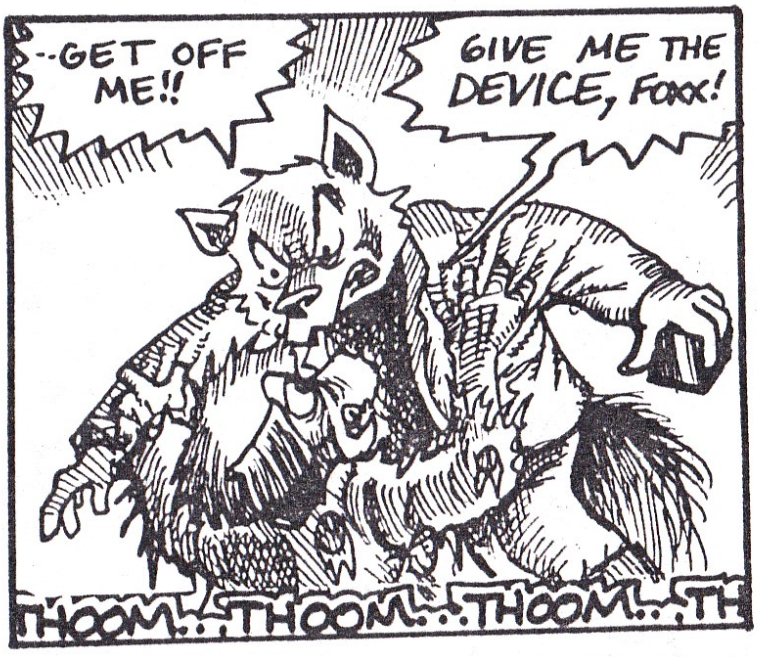


THOOM... THOOM... THOOM... THOOM... THOOM... THOOM...

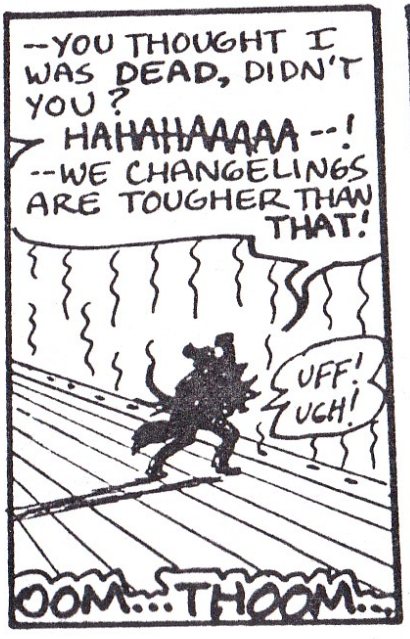

THOOM...THOOM...THOOM...TH

YAA!
DON'T BE A :GASP: FOOL, FOXX--!
M...THOOM...THOOM...

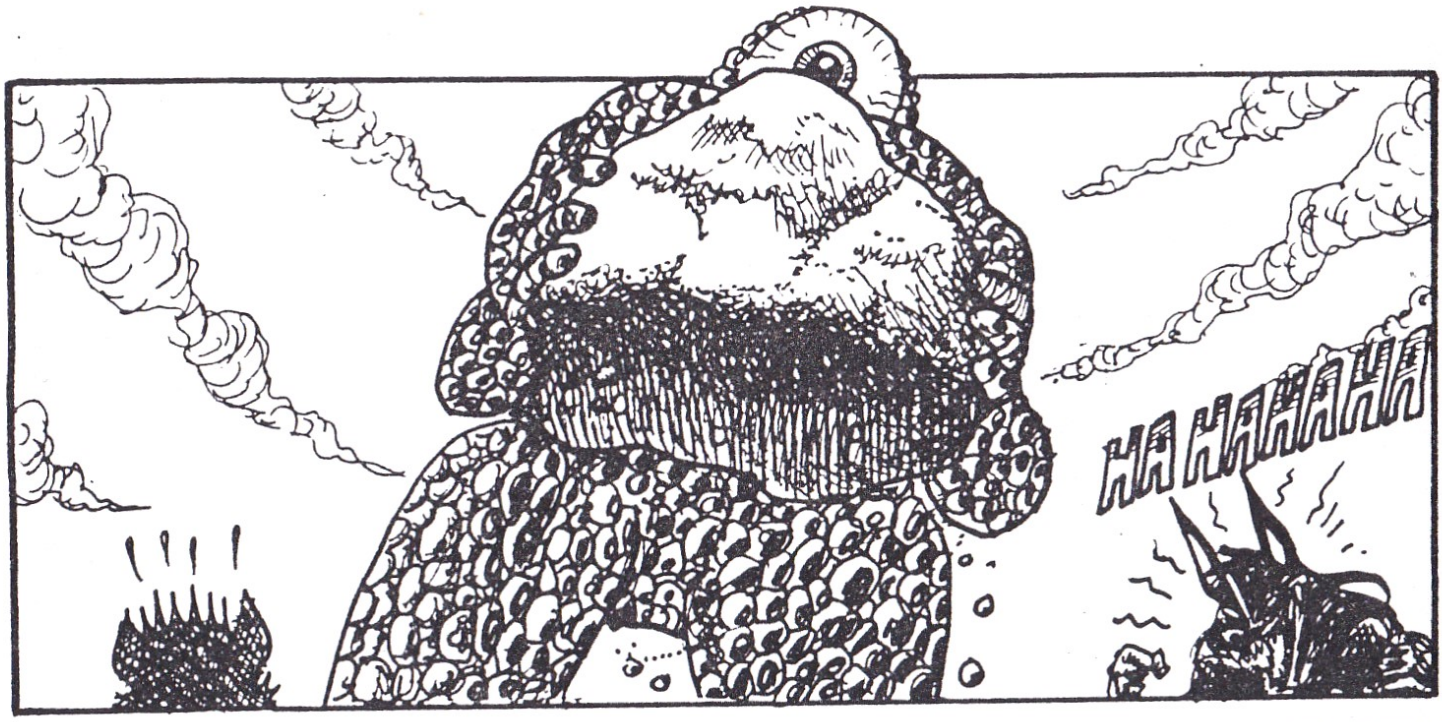
YOU ALMOST GAVE ME HEART FAILURE! -LET GO!!
--IF YOU DESTROY THE MACHINE YOU'LL RUIN EVERY-THING!
HOOM...THOOM...THOOM...

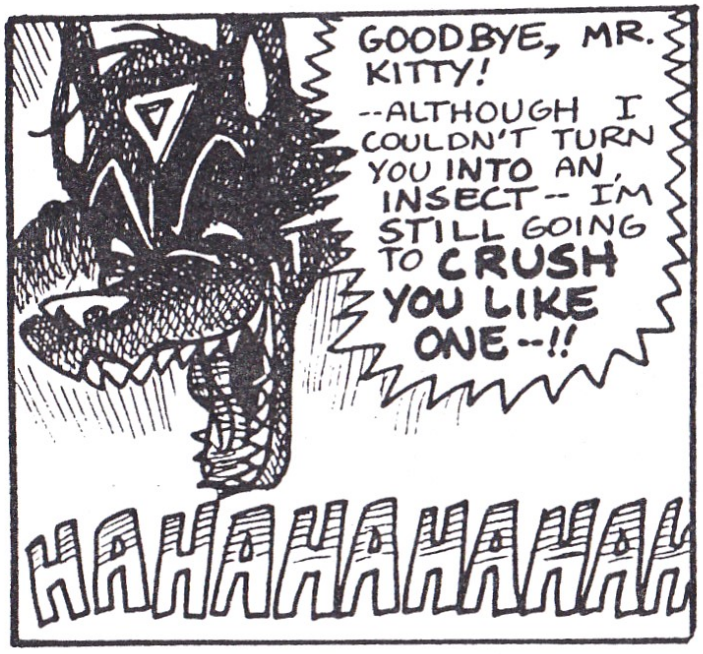

--GET OFF ME!!
GIVE ME THE DEVICE, FOXX!
THOOM...THOOM...THOOM...TH

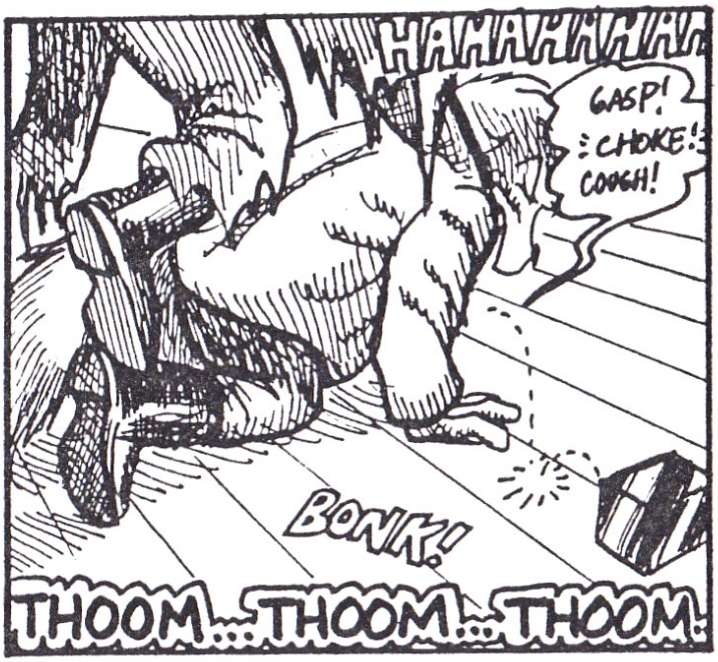
GIVE IT TO ME!!
AARGH!
OOM...THOOM...THOOM...

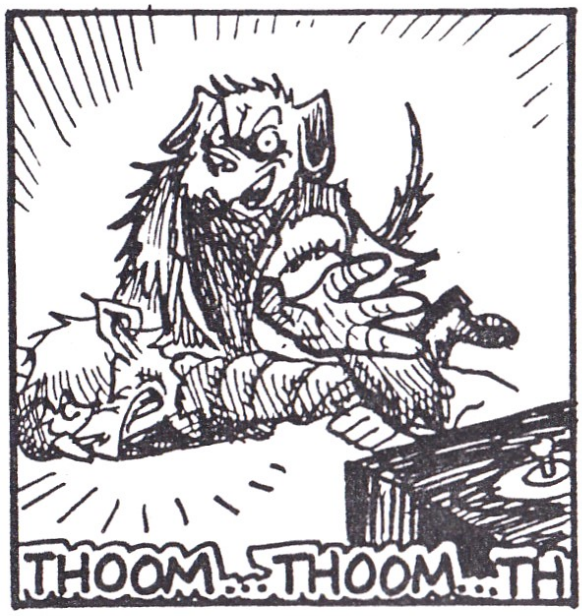

--YOU THOUGHT I WAS DEAD, DIDN'T YOU? HAHAHAAAAA--! --WE CHANGELINGS ARE TOUGHER THAN THAT!
UFF! UCH!
OOM...THOOM...

ARG-CH-K-K
DIE YOU FOOL!!
- CCHKK
- KKK!!!
HOOM...THOOM

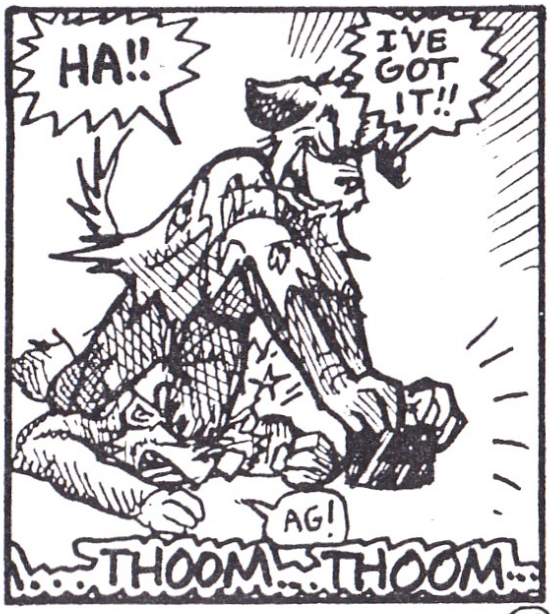

HA HAHAHAHA

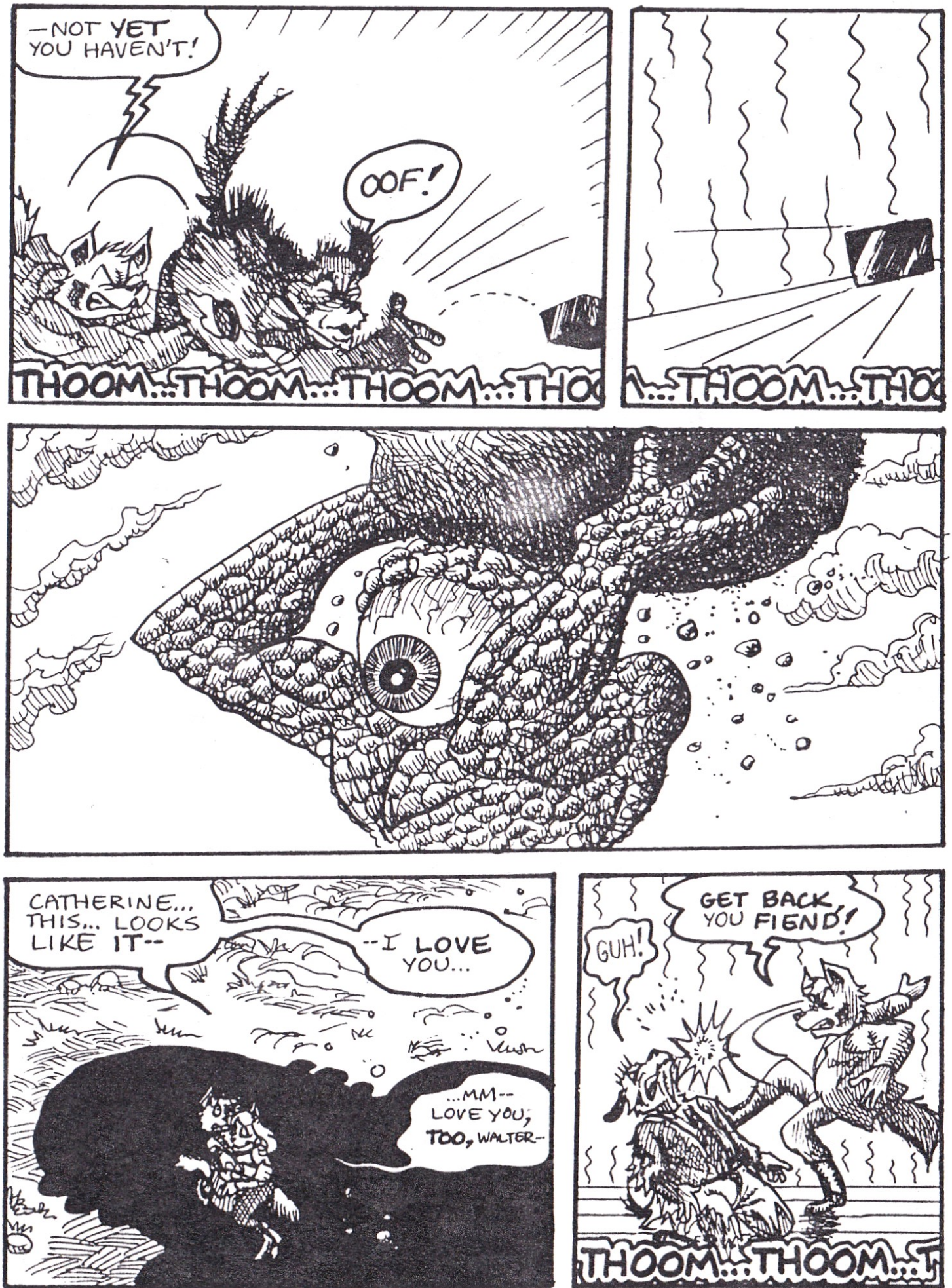

GOODBYE, MR. KITTY!
--ALTHOUGH I COULDN'T TURN YOU INTO AN INSECT -- I'M STILL GOING TO CRUSH YOU LIKE ONE --!!
HAHAHAHAHAHAH

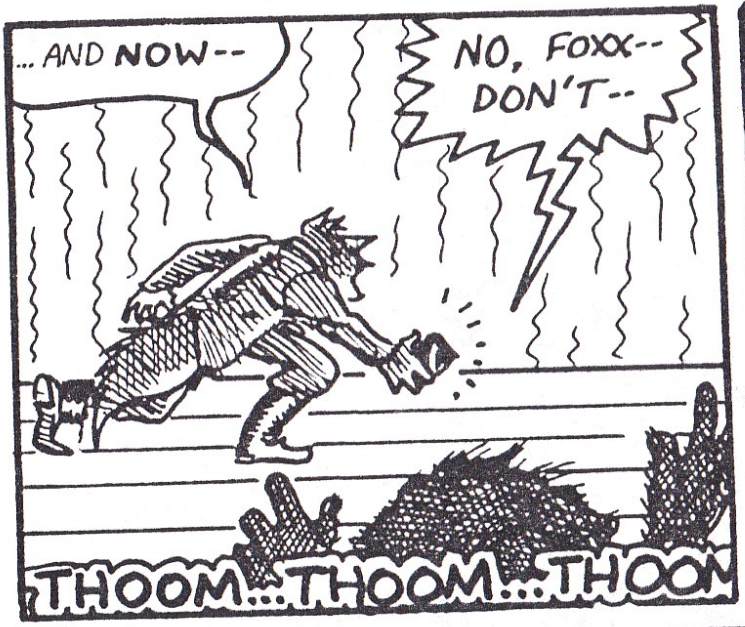

HAHAHAHAHAH
GASP! CHOKE! COUGH!
BONK!
THOOM...THOOM!...THOOM!

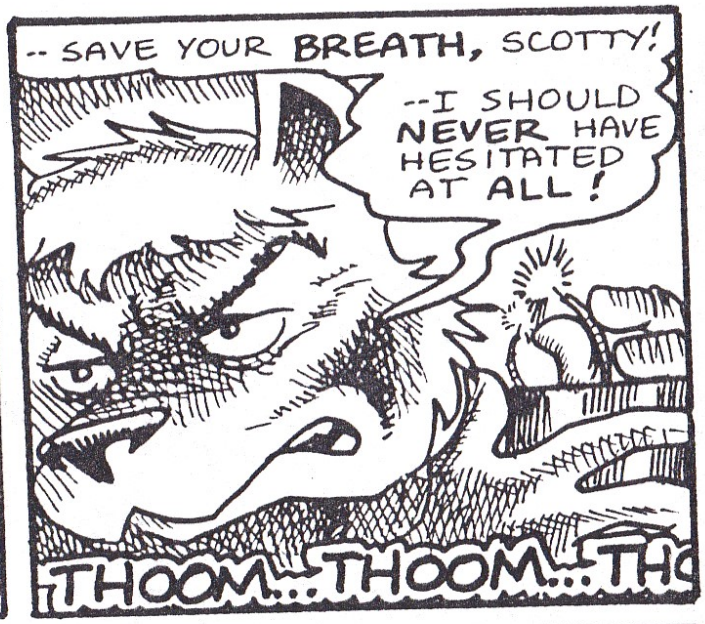

THOOM...THOOM...TH

OM...THOO

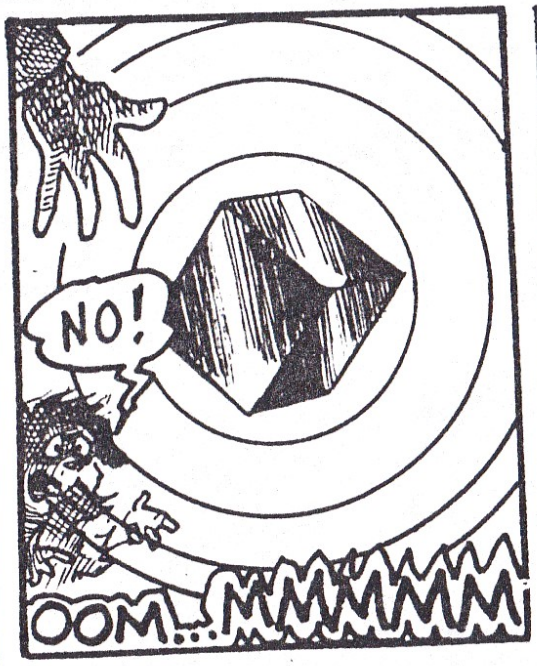

HA!!
I'VE GOT IT!!
AG!
...THOOM...THOOM...

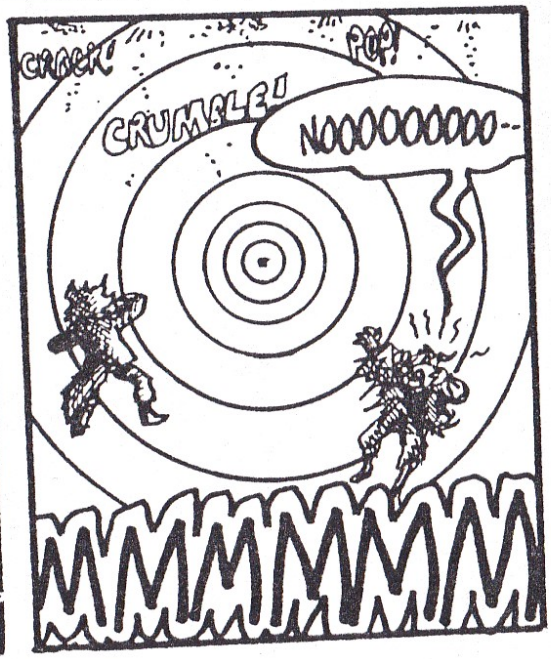

—NOT YET YOU HAVEN'T!
OOF!
THOOM...THOOM...THOOM...THO
...THOOM...THO
CATHERINE... THIS... LOOKS LIKE IT--
--I LOVE YOU...
...MM-- LOVE YOU, TOO, WALTER--
GUH!
GET BACK, YOU FIEND!
THOOM...THOOM...T


...AND NOW--
NO, FOXX-- DON'T--
THOOM...THOOM...THOOM

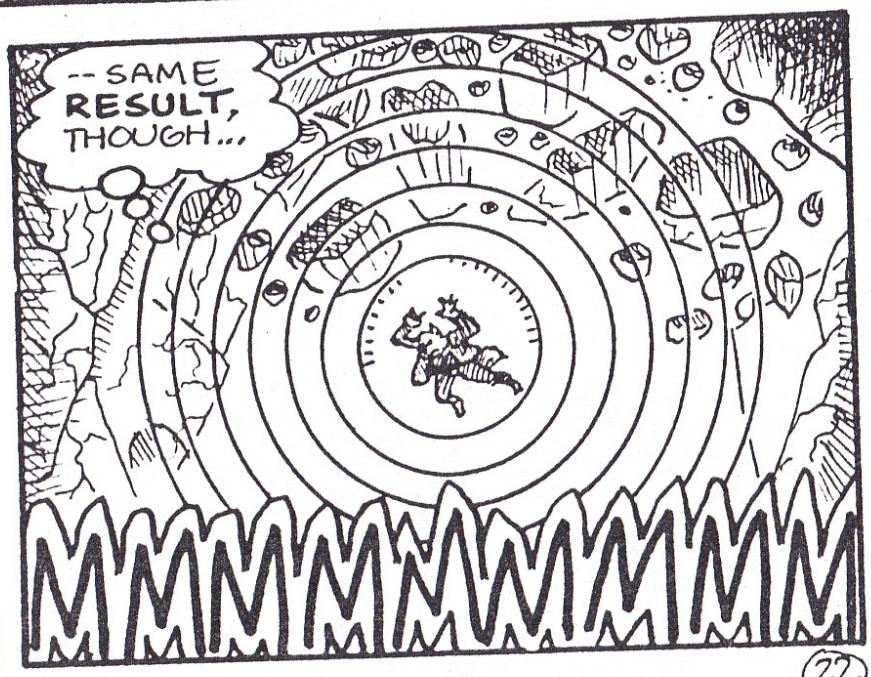

--SAVE YOUR BREATH, SCOTTY!
--I SHOULD NEVER HAVE HESITATED AT ALL!
THOOM...THOOM...TH

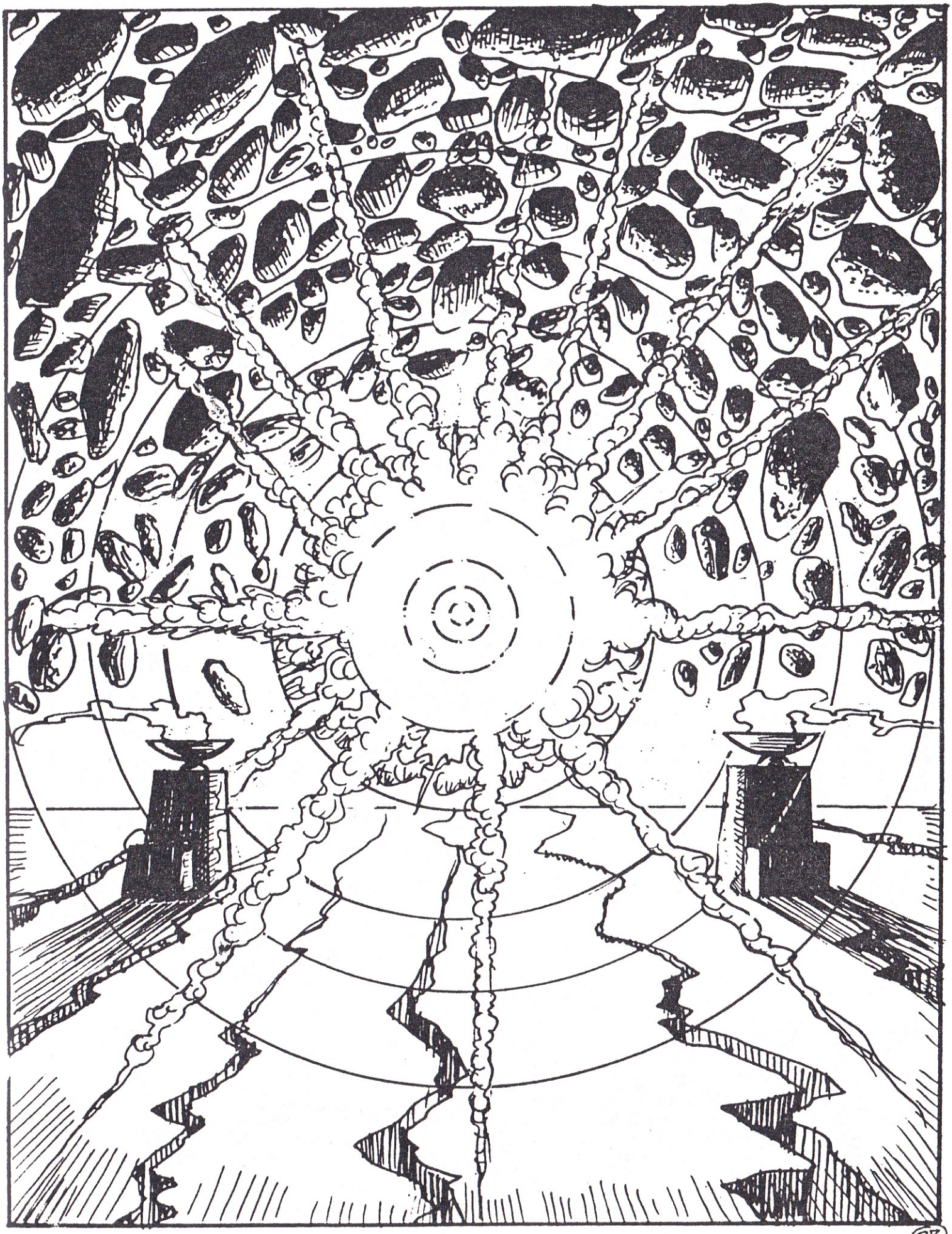
ZZZT!
THOOM...TH

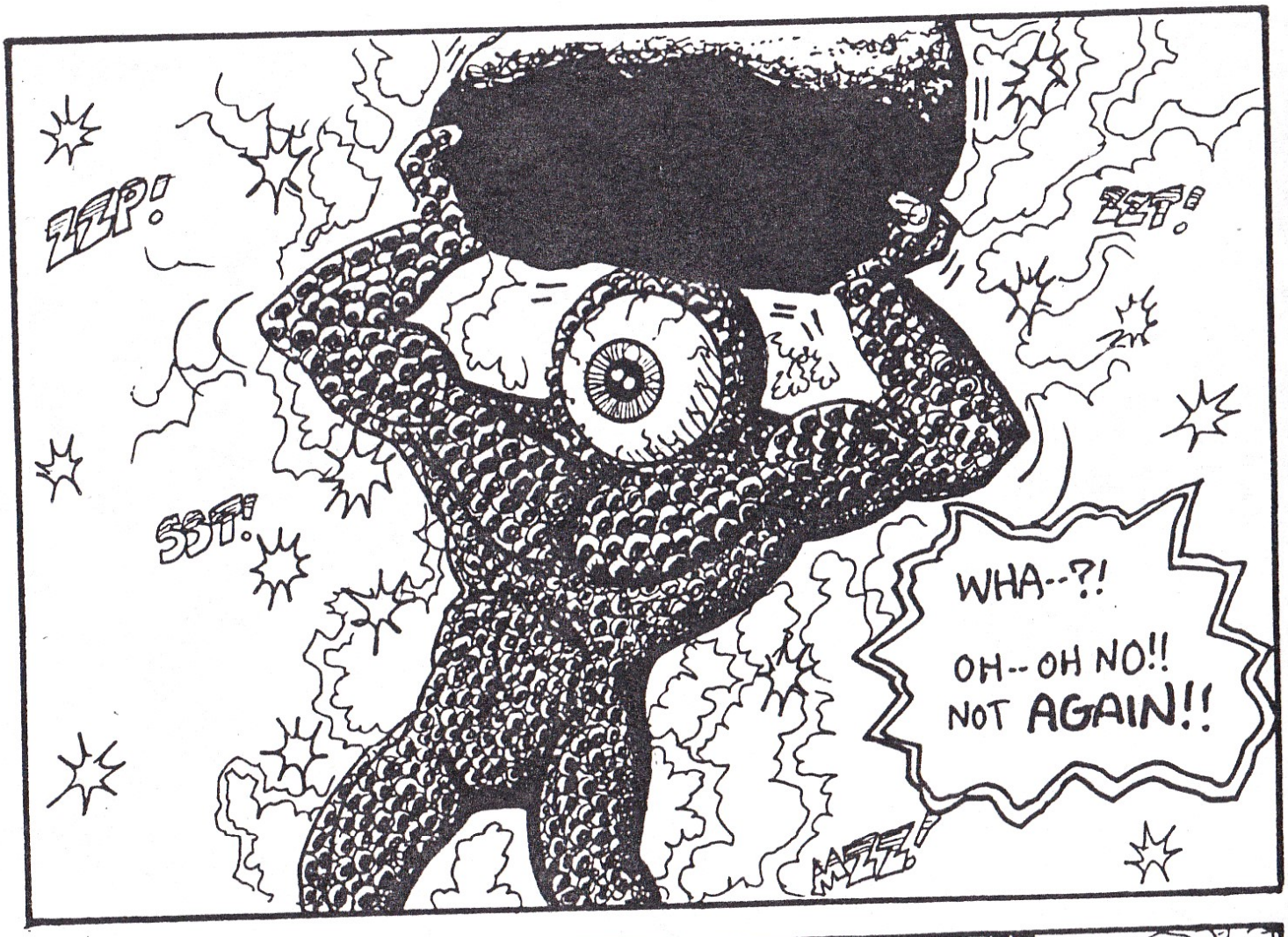

NO!
OOM...MMMMM

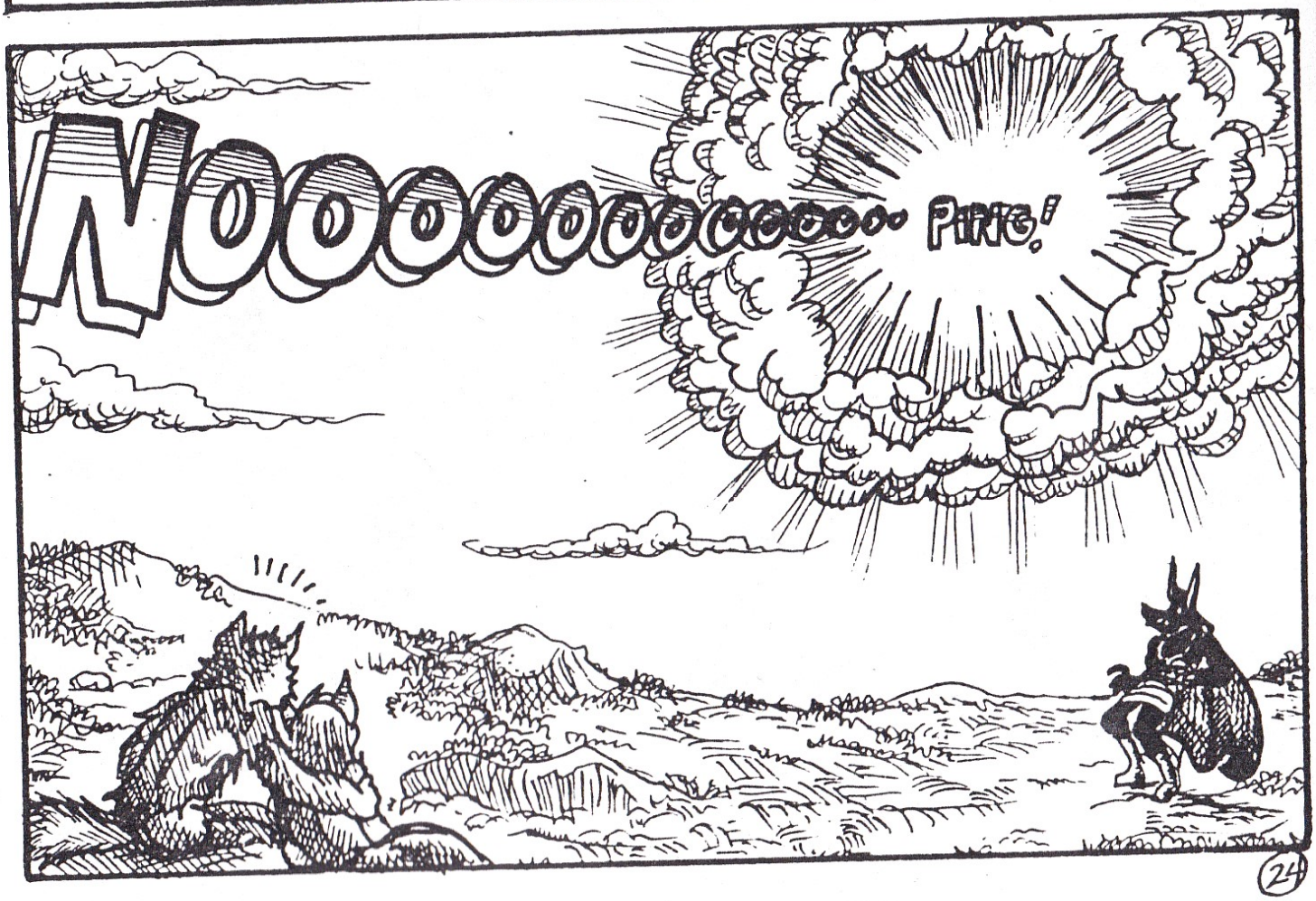

CRACK!
POP!
CRUMBLE!
NOOOOOOOOO--
MMMMMM

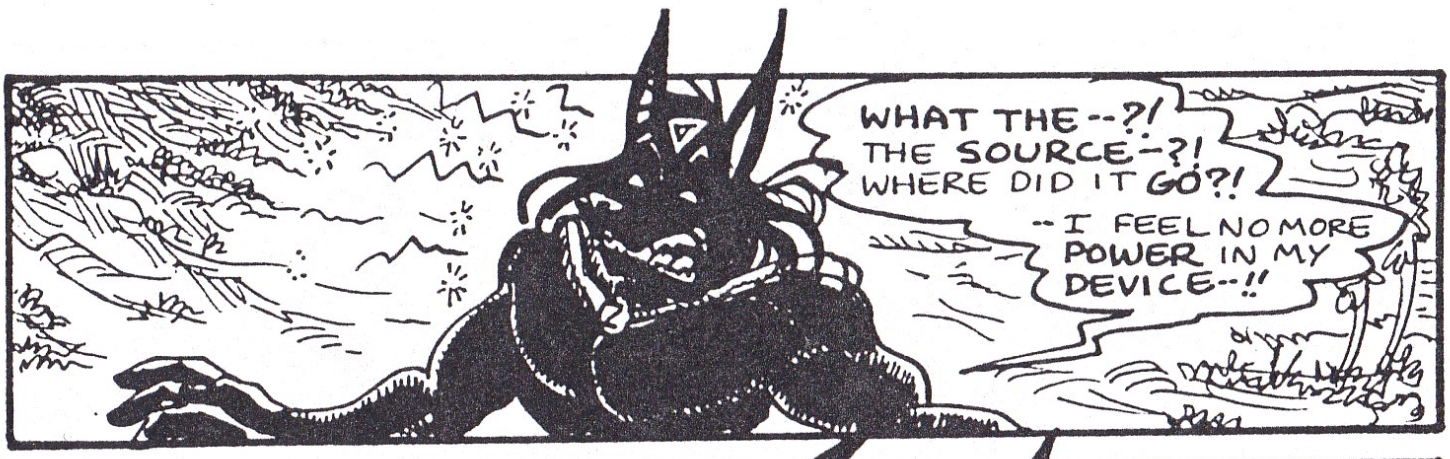
IT'S NOT A BOMB--!
IT'S SOME KIND OF SONIC AMPLI-FIER--!
MMMMMM

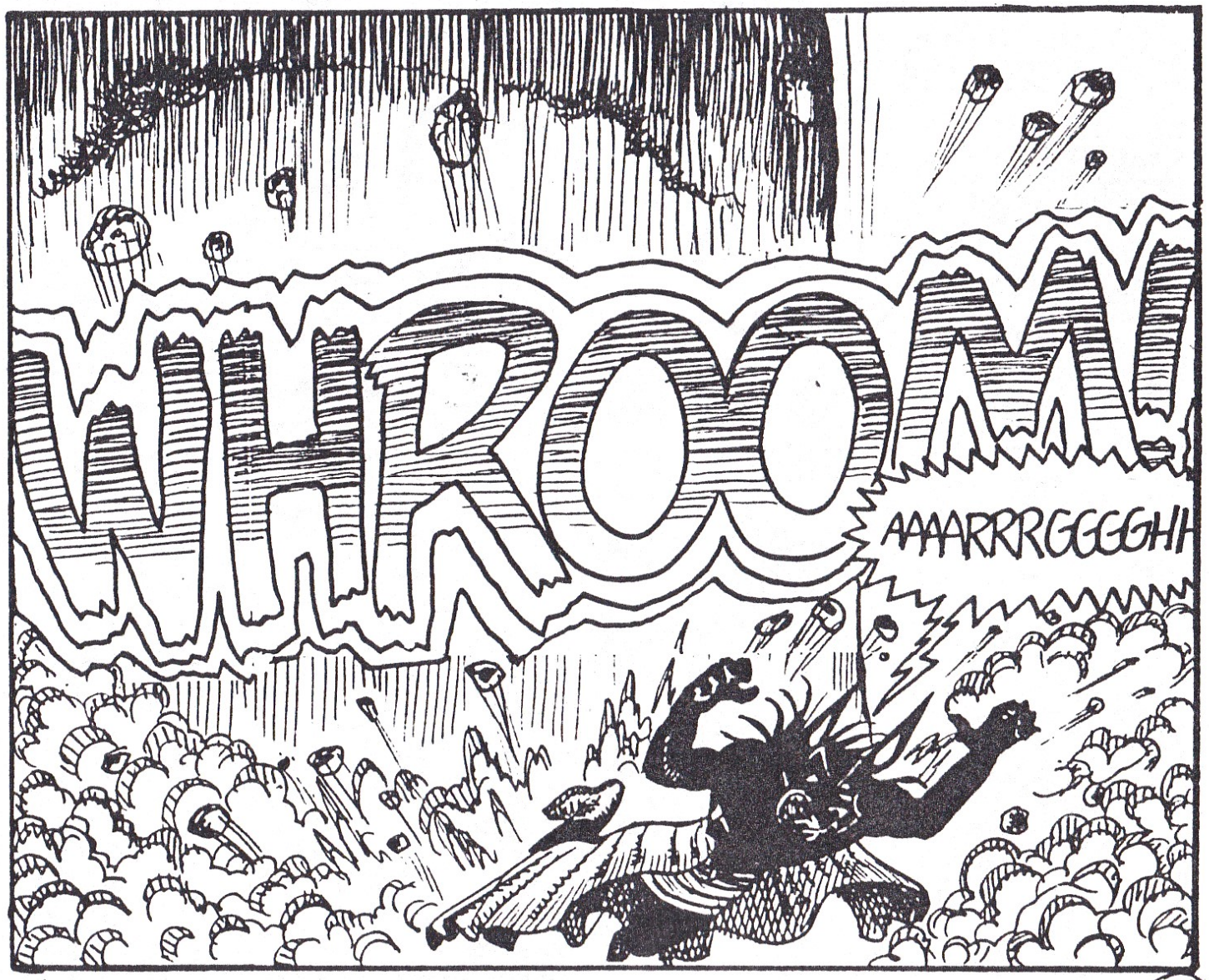

--SAME RESULT, THOUGH...
MMMMMMMMM

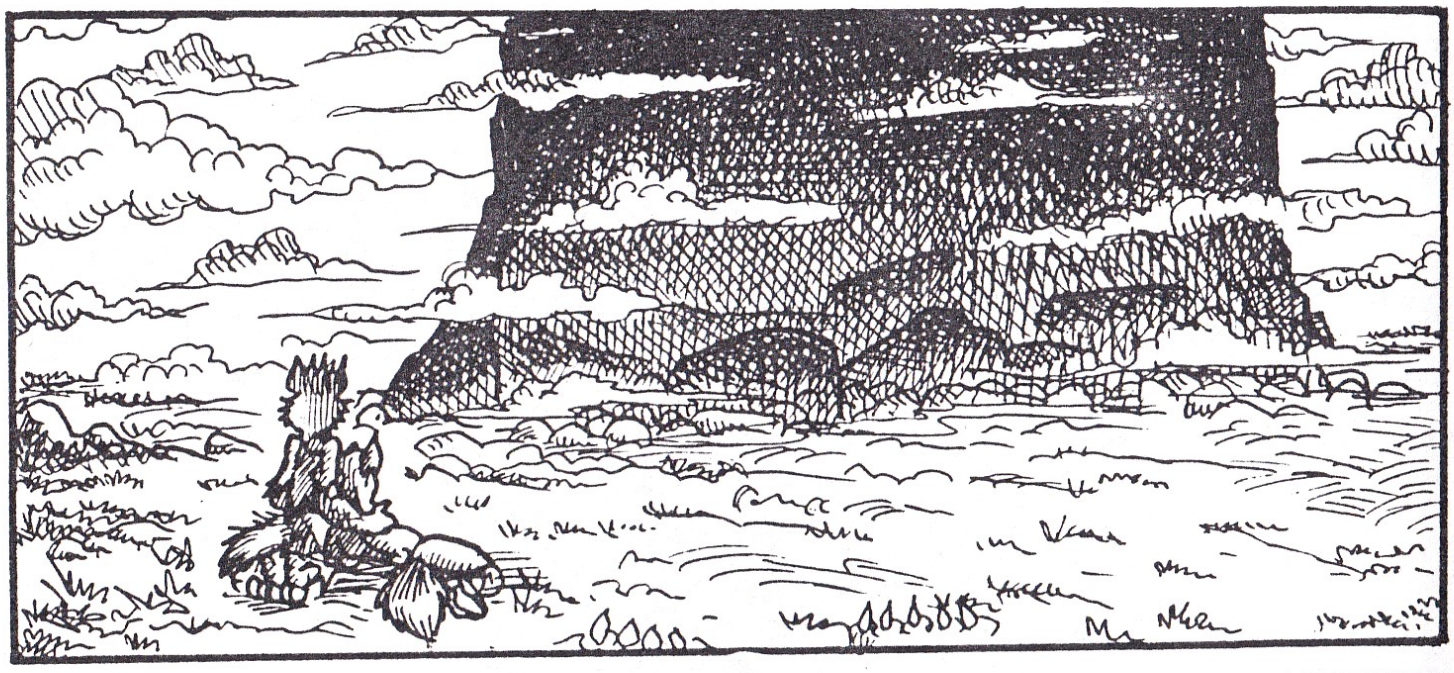


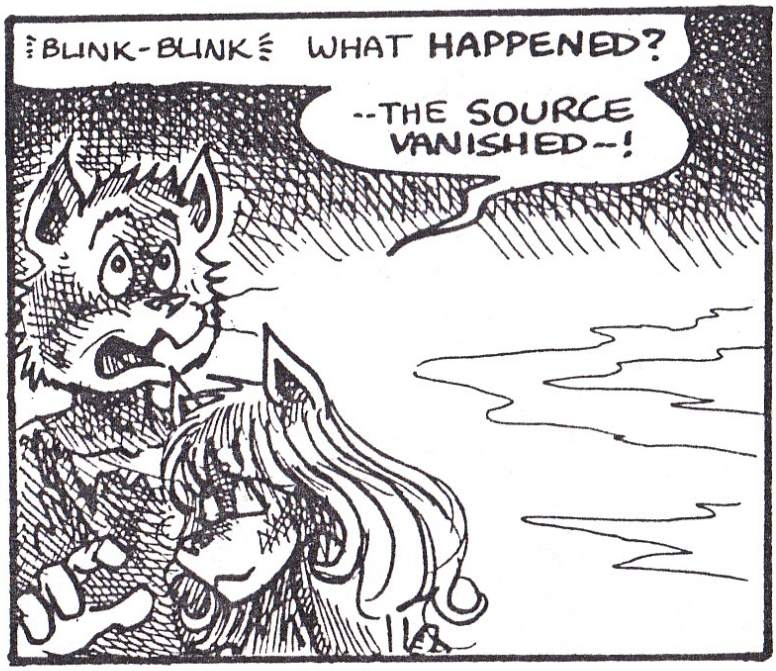

ZZZP!
ZZT!
SSST!
WHA--?!
OH-- OH NO!!
NOT AGAIN!!
MZZZ!


NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO
PING!


WHAT THE--?! THE SOURCE--?! WHERE DID IT GO?!
--I FEEL NO MORE POWER IN MY DEVICE--!!


WHROOM!
AAAARRRGGGGHH

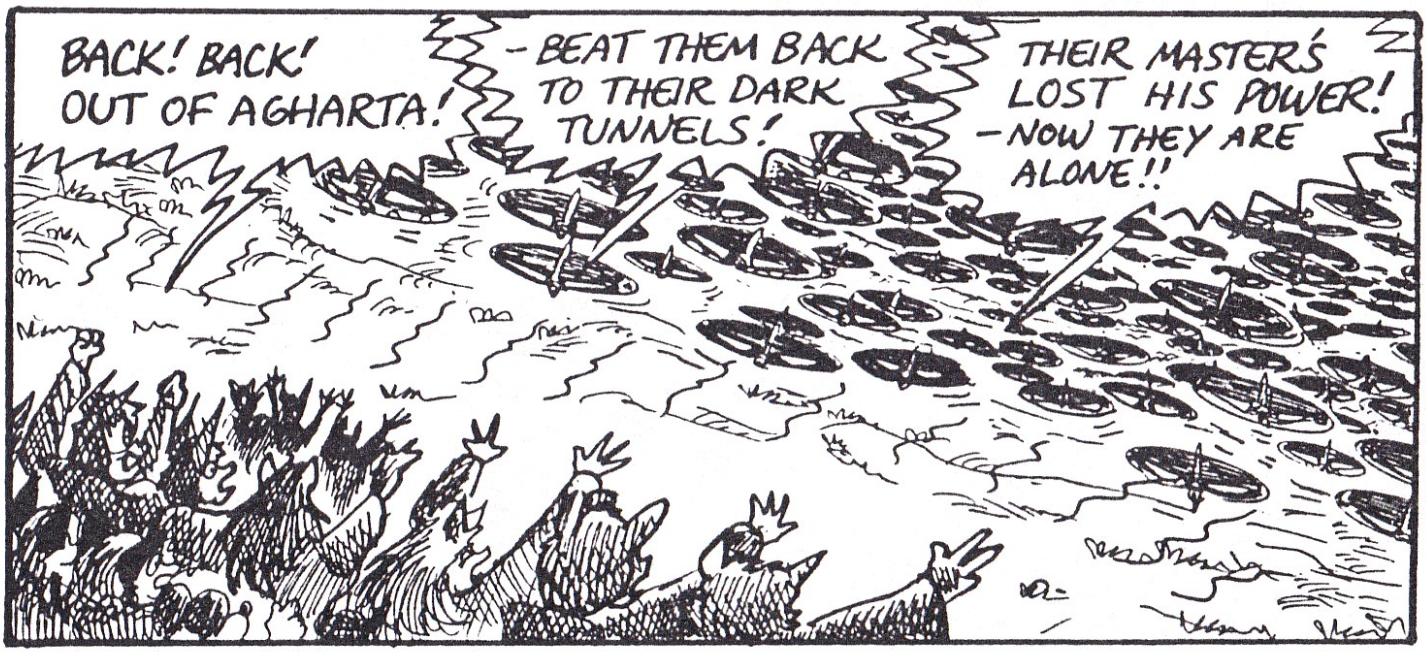



BLINK-BLINK WHAT HAPPENED?
--THE SOURCE VANISHED--!

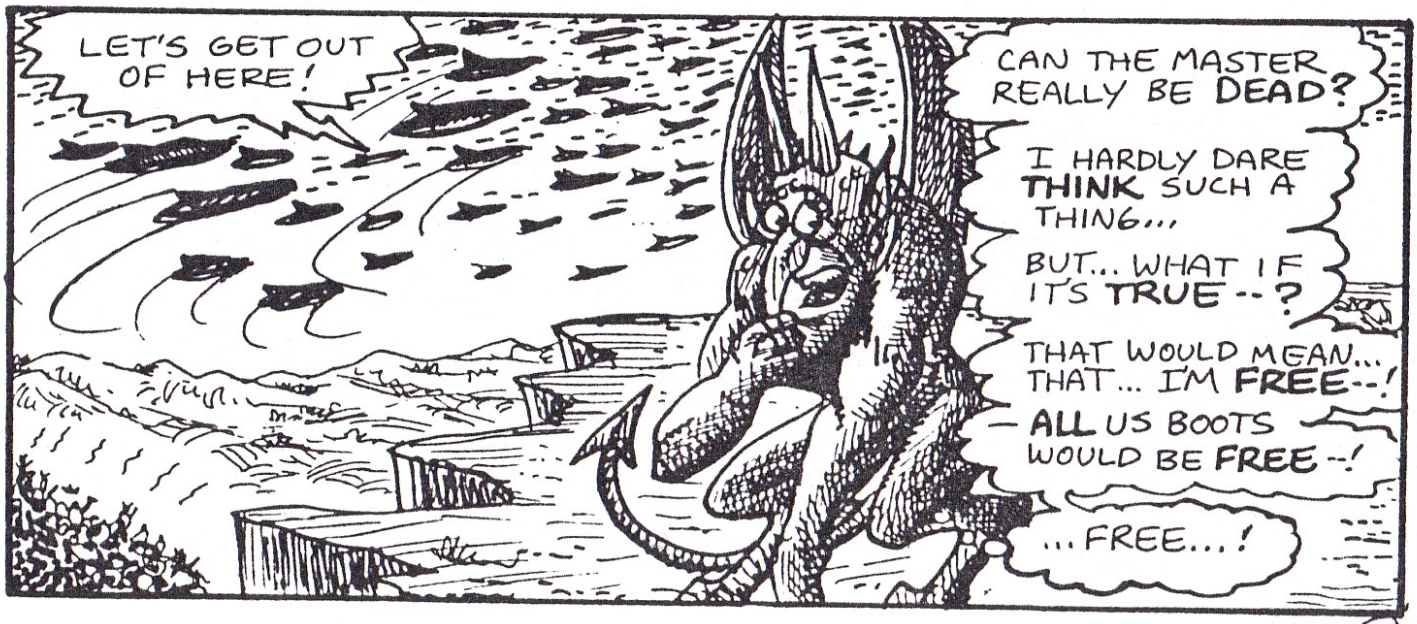
CATHERINE--! IT'S GONE!
MM! GOOD...
...JUST TEN MORE MINUTES...
...NIGHTY NIGHT...

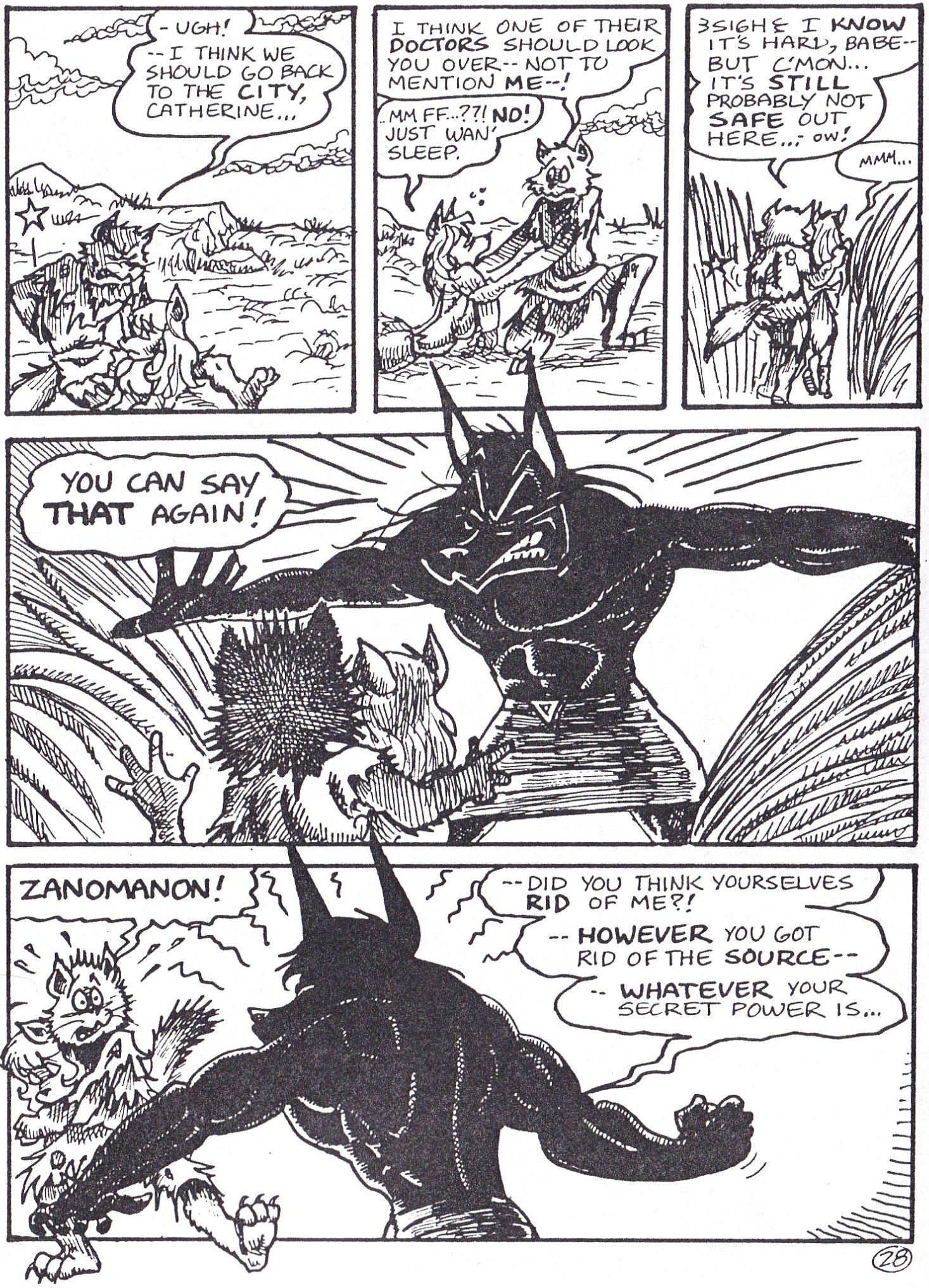
SIGH SLEEP THEN, DARLIN'...
—I MAY JOIN YOU...

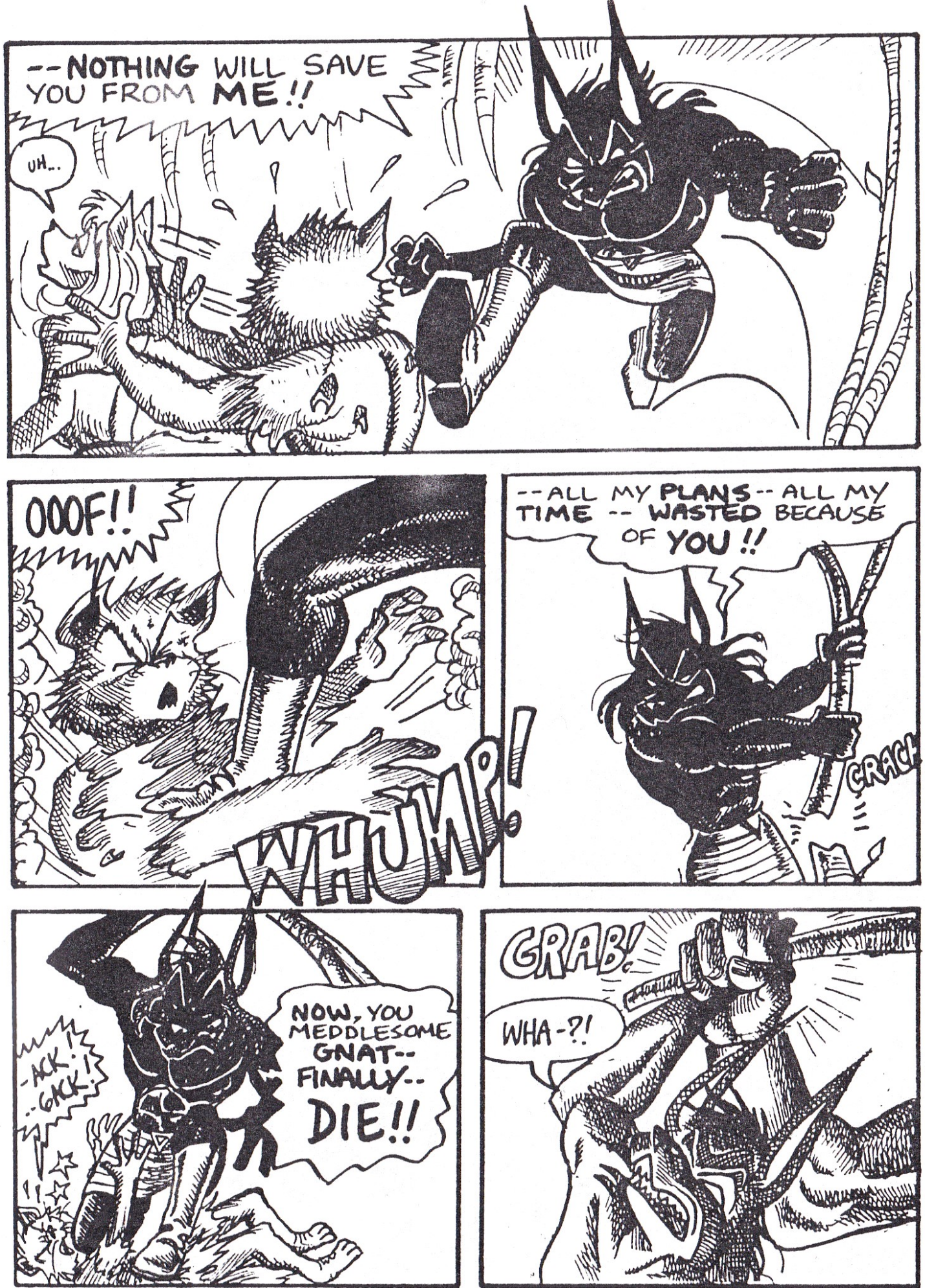
—WITHOUT THEIR SOURCE ALLY THE BOOTS ARE CONFUSED--! THEY HESITATE--!
DON'T LET THEM RECOVER--! TAKE ADVANTAGE!!


BACK! BACK! OUT OF AGHARTA!
- BEAT THEM BACK TO THEIR DARK TUNNELS!
THEIR MASTER'S LOST HIS POWER! - NOW THEY ARE ALONE!!

WHAT HAPPENED TO ZANOMANON--? --WHAT HAPPENED TO THE SOURCE?
- THE SOURCE IS GONE! - THE LAST TIME I SAW THE MASTER, THAT MOUNTAIN WAS HEADED TOWARD HIM-!
--HE MUST'VE BOUGHT IT!


LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
CAN THE MASTER REALLY BE DEAD?
I HARDLY DARE THINK SUCH A THING...
BUT... WHAT IF IT'S TRUE--?
THAT WOULD MEAN... THAT... I'M FREE--!
- ALL US BOOTS WOULD BE FREE--!
...FREE...!


-UGH!
--I THINK WE SHOULD GO BACK TO THE CITY, CATHERINE...
I THINK ONE OF THEIR DOCTORS SHOULD LOOK YOU OVER-- NOT TO MENTION ME--!
..MM FF...??! NO! JUST WAN' SLEEP.
3SIGH& I KNOW IT'S HARD, BABE-- BUT C'MON... IT'S STILL PROBABLY NOT SAFE OUT HERE...; OW!
MMM...
YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN!
ZANOMANON!
--DID YOU THINK YOURSELVES RID OF ME?!
-- HOWEVER YOU GOT RID OF THE SOURCE--
-- WHATEVER YOUR SECRET POWER IS...


--NOTHING WILL SAVE YOU FROM ME!!
UH...
OOOF!!
WHUMP!
--ALL MY PLANS -- ALL MY TIME -- WASTED BECAUSE OF YOU!!
CRACK
-ACK!
..GACK!
NOW, YOU MEDDLESOME GNAT-- FINALLY-- DIE!!
GRAB!
WHA-?!

HELLO, BROTHER!

M-MENDEL!!

YES! YOU THOUGHT ME **DEAD**, DIDN'T YOU?--**SURPRISE!!**

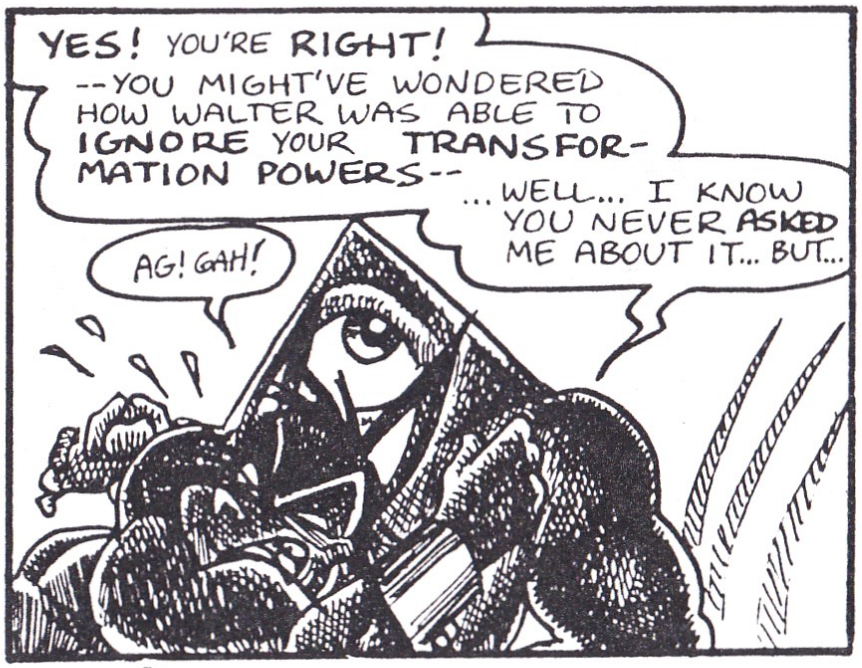
--I'VE BEEN **WAITING** FOR A CHANCE TO GET MY **HANDS** ON YOU--!

KICK!

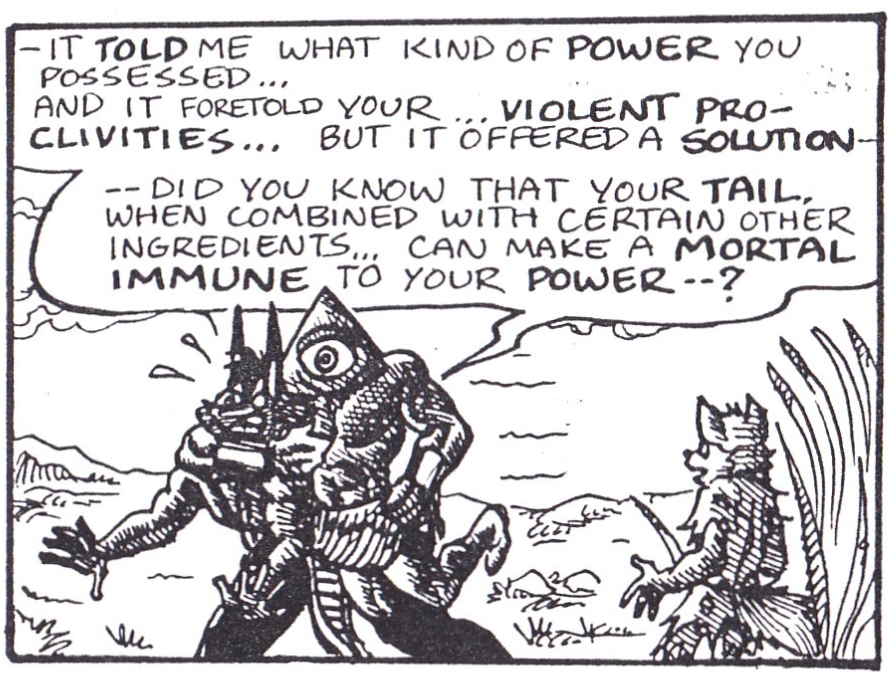
FLAIL!

¡GASP!¿ I SEE IT **ALL** NOW! **YOU'VE** BEEN HELPING THIS CAT TO **THWART** ME--!

--ALL THIS TIME, IT'S BEEN **YOU**--!

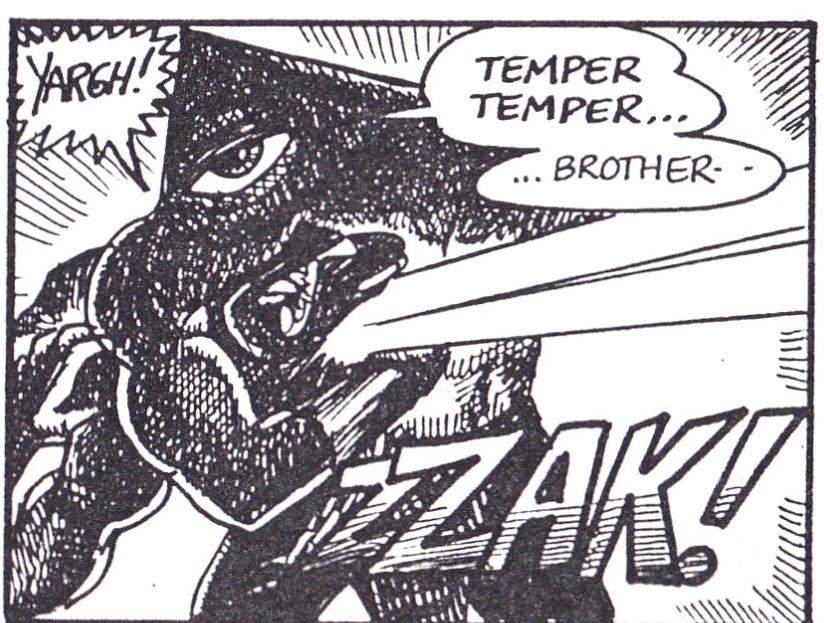

YES! YOU'RE RIGHT!
--YOU MIGHT'VE WONDERED HOW WALTER WAS ABLE TO IGNORE YOUR TRANSFORMATION POWERS--
...WELL... I KNOW YOU NEVER ASKED ME ABOUT IT... BUT...
AG! GAH!

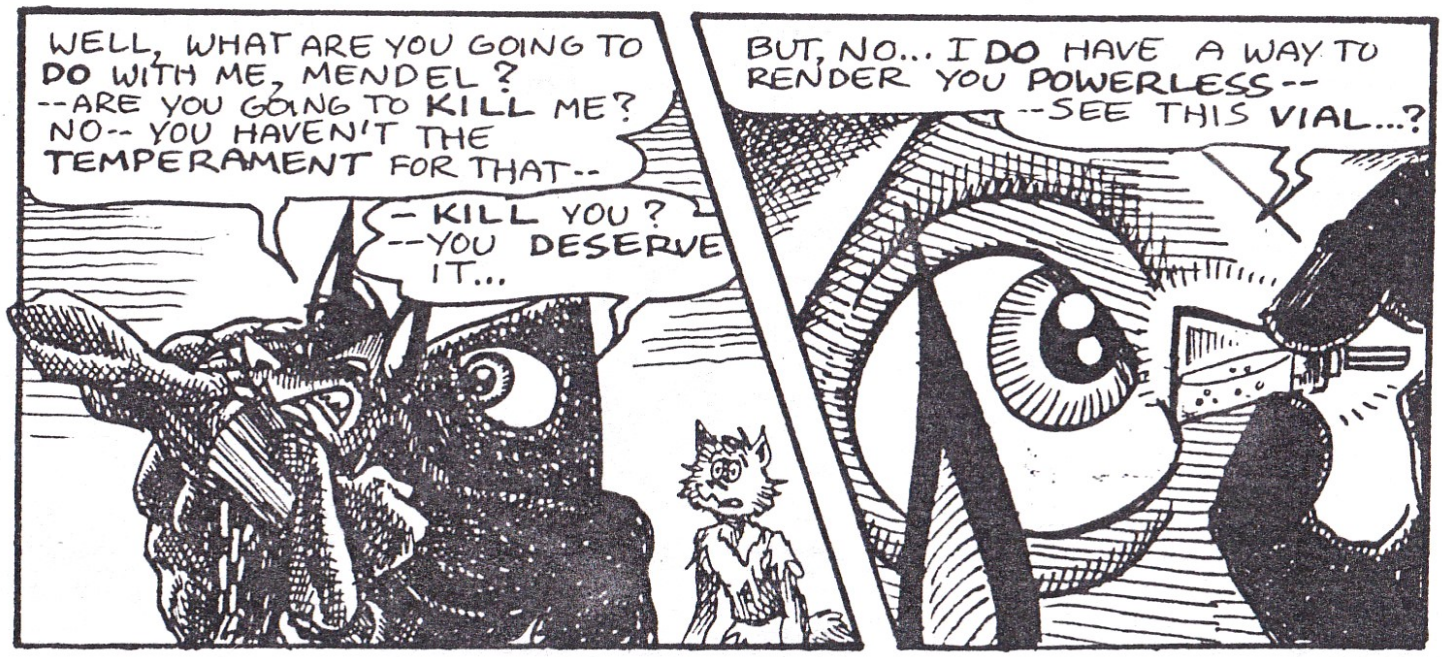
...I HAD A REASON FOR CHOPPING OFF YOUR TAIL WHEN WE WERE CHILDREN IN ATLANTIS -- YOU SEE... I HAD A VISION OF THE FUTURE BACK THEN...
- ARG!
- NNG!

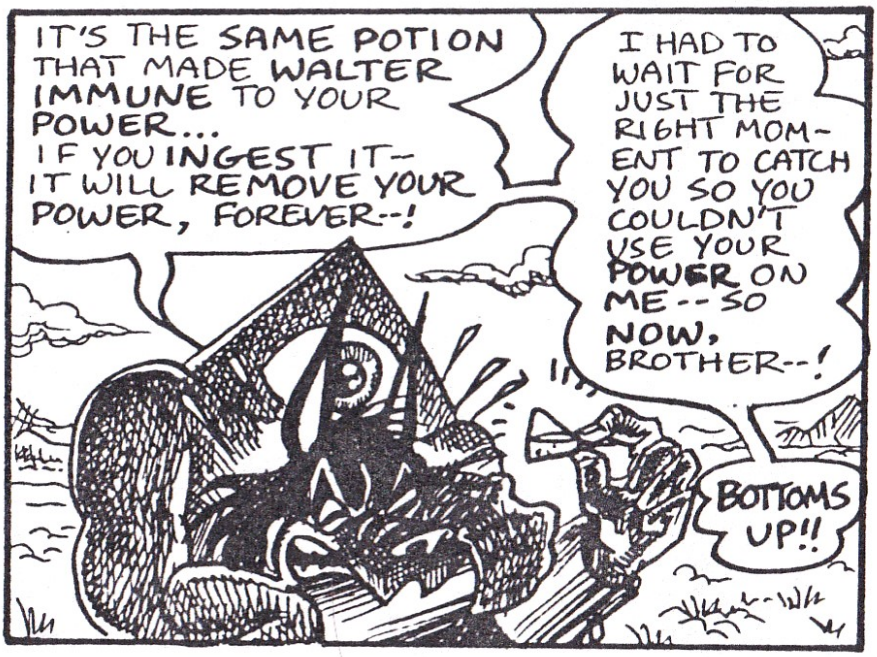

-IT TOLD ME WHAT KIND OF POWER YOU POSSESSED...
AND IT FORETOLD YOUR ... VIOLENT PROCLIVITIES... BUT IT OFFERED A SOLUTION-
--DID YOU KNOW THAT YOUR TAIL, WHEN COMBINED WITH CERTAIN OTHER INGREDIENTS... CAN MAKE A MORTAL IMMUNE TO YOUR POWER--?

--WELL IT CAN--!
ARGH! YOU-- IF I CAN GET MY EYES ON YOU--!!

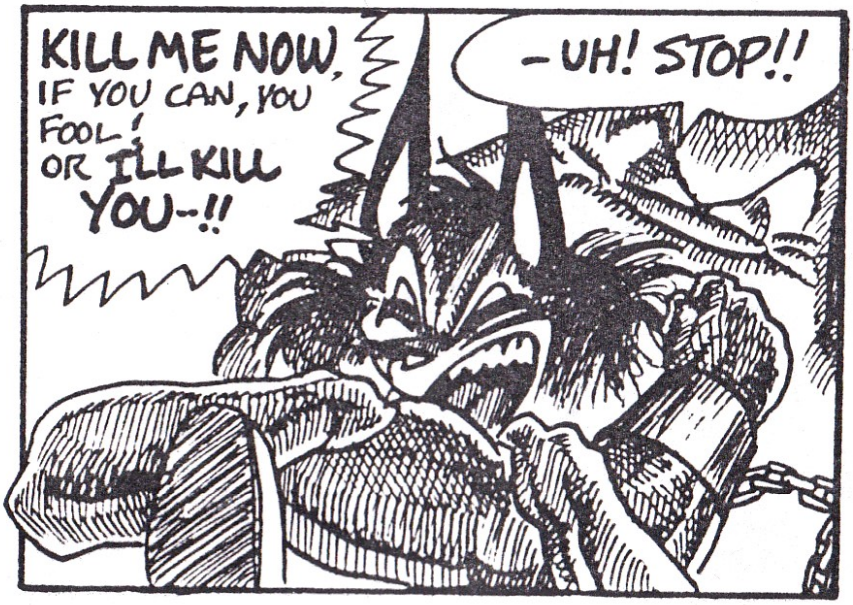
-YOU'LL REGRET MANHANDLING ME LIKE THIS!
ARGH!
ZZZTT!


YARGH!
TEMPER TEMPER...
...BROTHER--
ZAK!

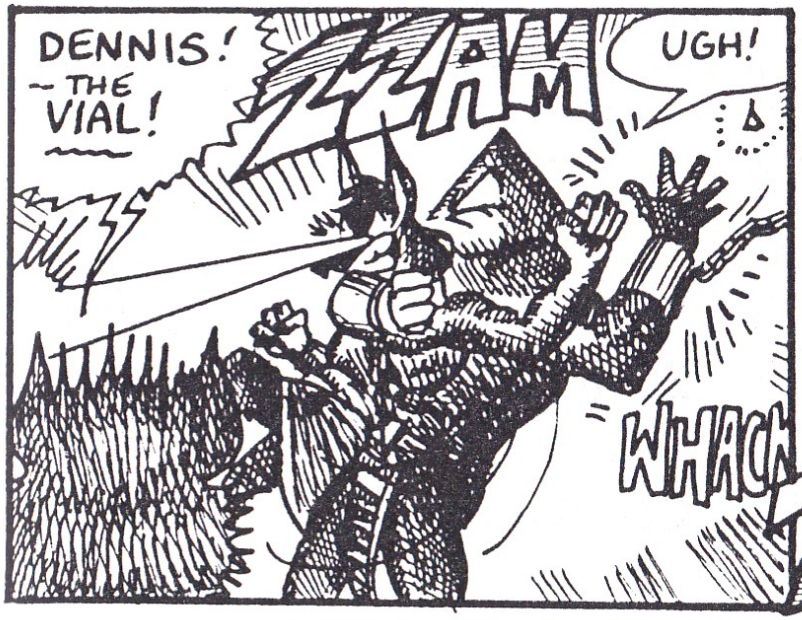

WELL, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH ME, MENDEL? --ARE YOU GOING TO KILL ME? NO-- YOU HAVEN'T THE TEMPERAMENT FOR THAT--
-KILL YOU? --YOU DESERVE IT...
BUT, NO... I DO HAVE A WAY TO RENDER YOU POWERLESS-- --SEE THIS VIAL...?

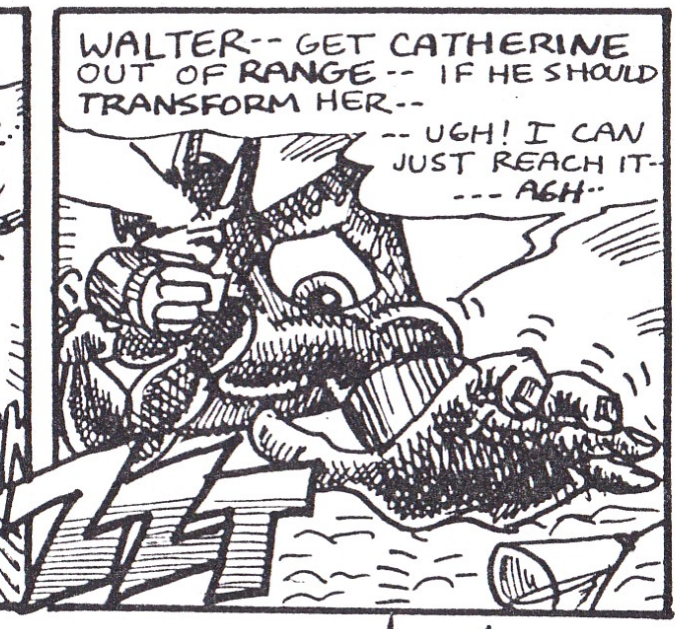

IT'S THE SAME POTION THAT MADE WALTER IMMUNE TO YOUR POWER... IF YOU INGEST IT-- IT WILL REMOVE YOUR POWER, FOREVER--!
I HAD TO WAIT FOR JUST THE RIGHT MOMENT TO CATCH YOU SO YOU COULDN'T USE YOUR POWER ON ME-- SO NOW, BROTHER--!
BOTTOMS UP!!

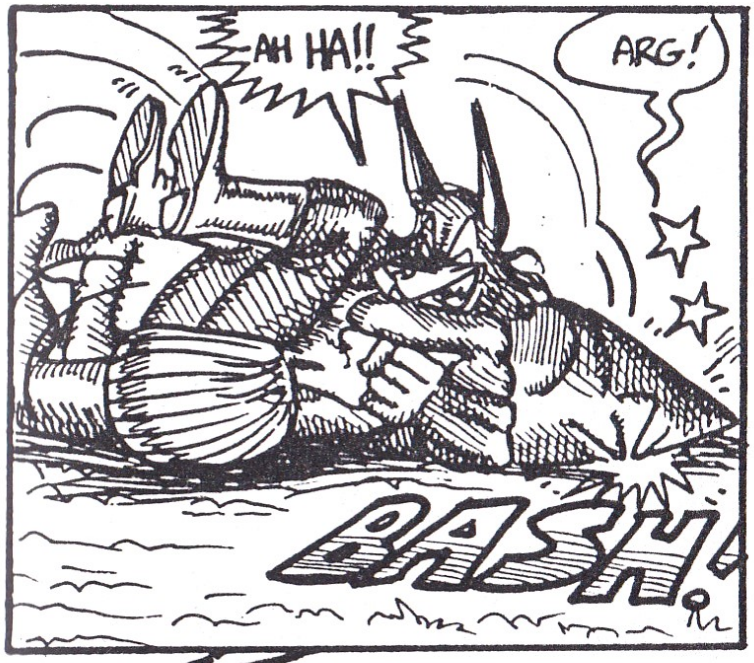
NEVER!! I'LL NEVER LET YOU HUMILIATE ME--BETRAY ME AGAIN--!!

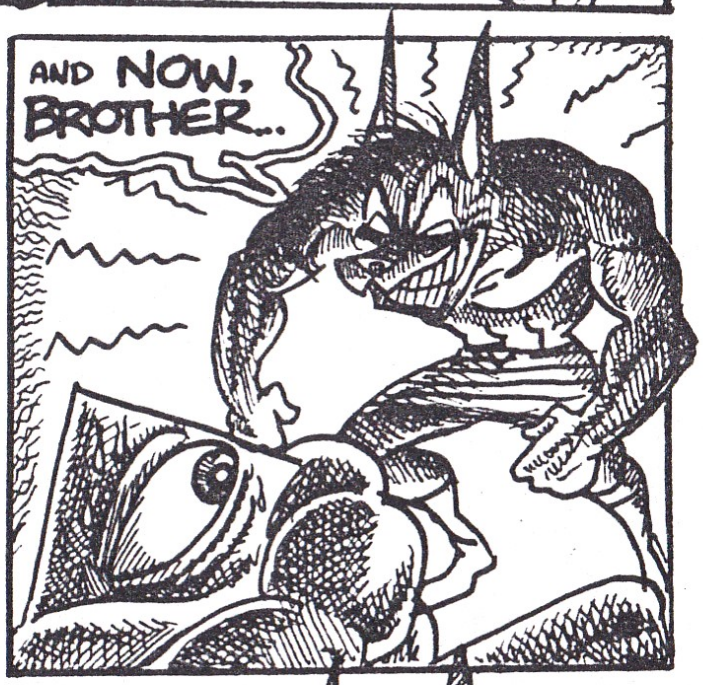

KILL ME NOW, IF YOU CAN, YOU FOOL! OR I'LL KILL YOU--!!
-UH! STOP!!

I'LL NEVER STOP!! NEVER!!


DENNIS! -- THE VIAL!
ZZAM
UGH!
WHACK


WALTER -- GET CATHERINE OUT OF RANGE -- IF HE SHOULD TRANSFORM HER --
-- UGH! I CAN JUST REACH IT -- --- AGH --
ZZT

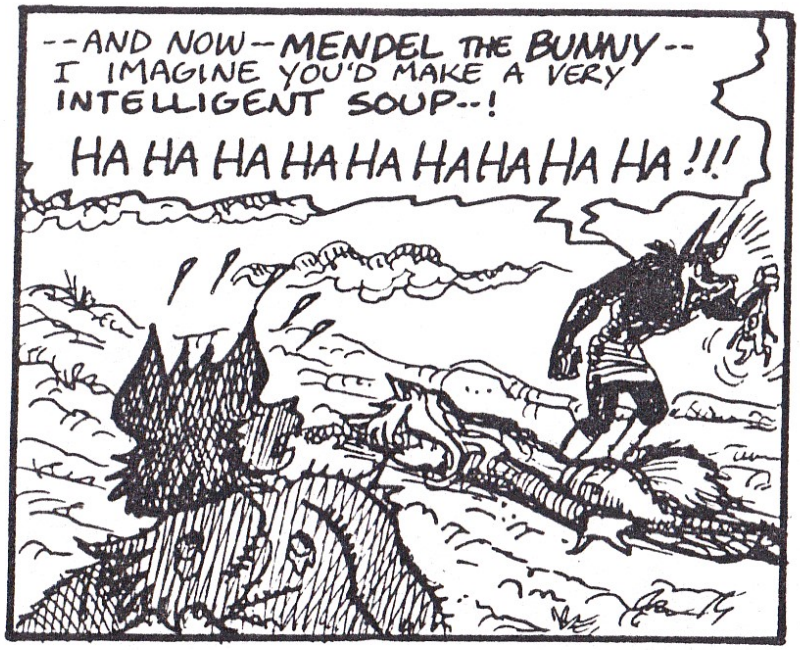

AH HA!!
ARG!
BASH!

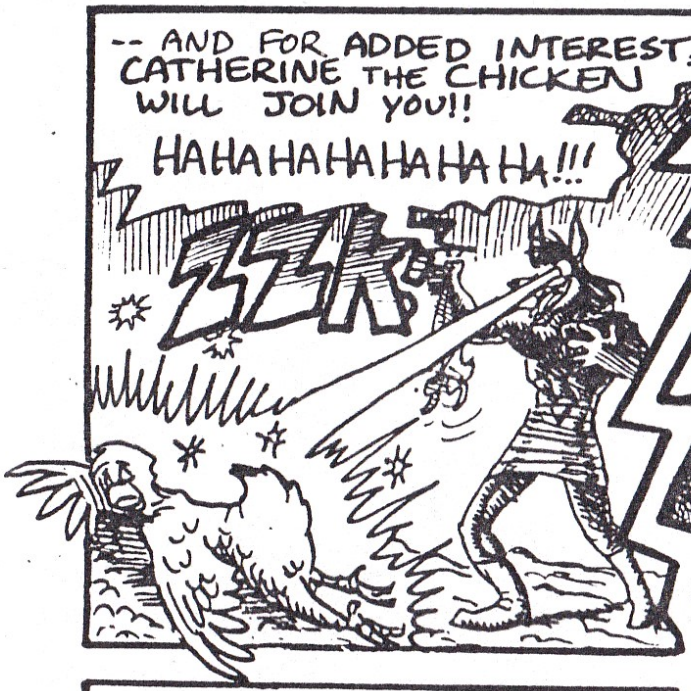

AND NOW, BROTHER...

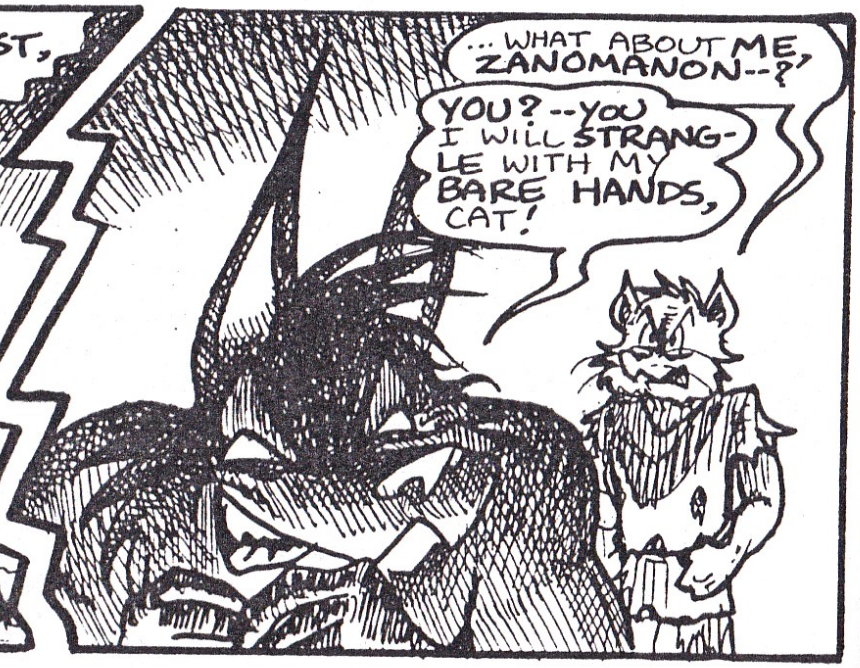
ZZK!

-- OH, NO!!
!

HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!!!

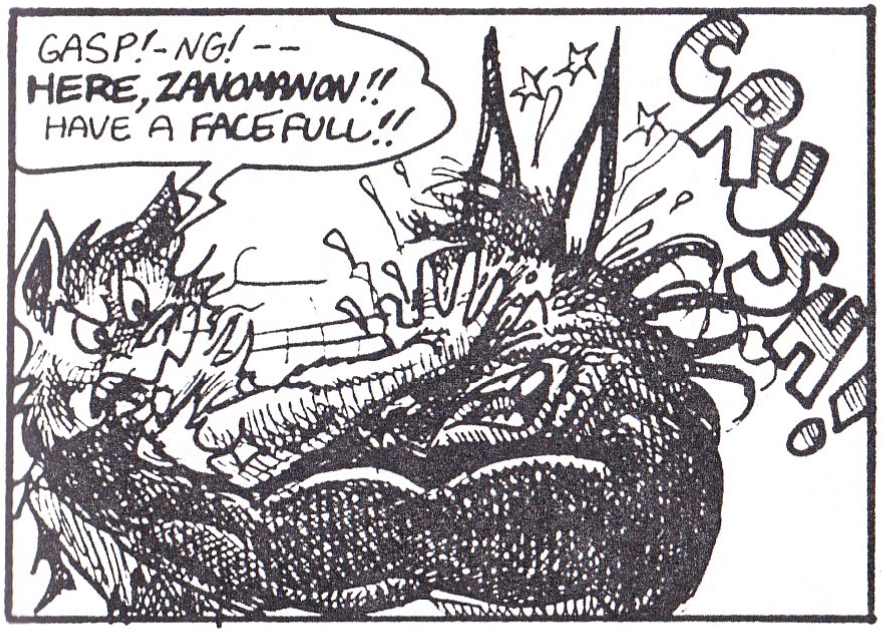

--AND NOW--MENDEL THE BUNNY--
I IMAGINE YOU'D MAKE A VERY
INTELLIGENT SOUP--!
HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!!!

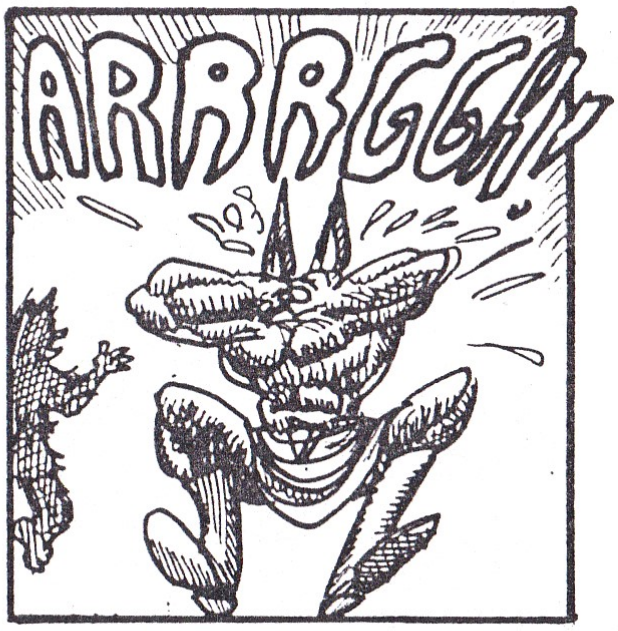

--AND FOR ADDED INTEREST,
CATHERINE THE CHICKEN
WILL JOIN YOU!!
HAHAHAHAHAHAHA!!!
ZZZK

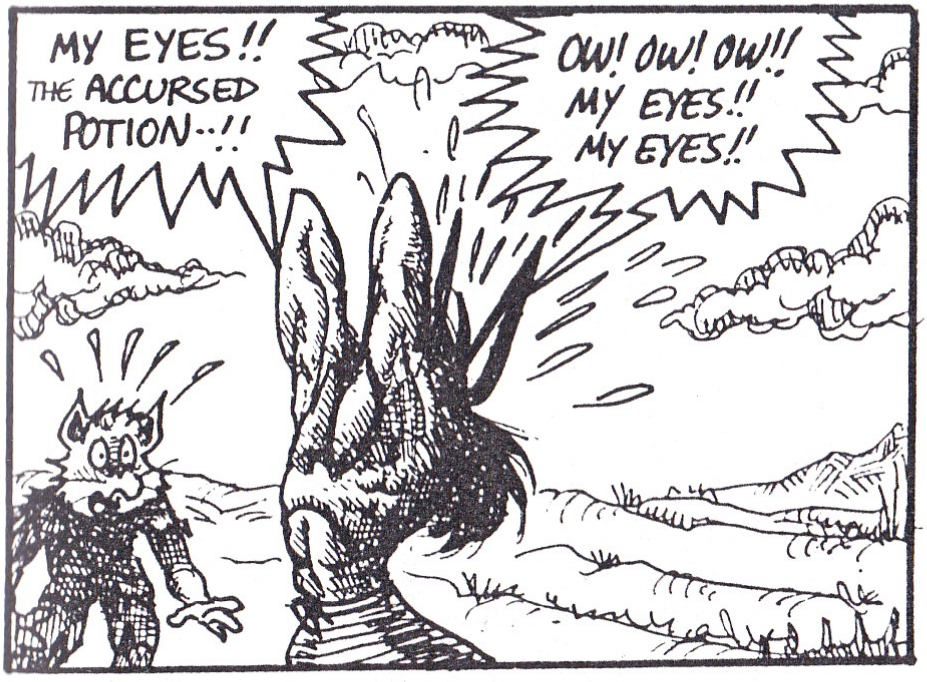

...WHAT ABOUT ME,
ZANOMANON--?
YOU?--YOU
I WILL STRANGLE WITH MY
BARE HANDS,
CAT!

I'VE SUFFERED YOUR
WRETCHED INTERFERENCE
FOR THE LAST TIME!!
COME AND
GET ME,
CREEP!

DIE, YOU RIDICULOUS FOOL!!
AGH-
GKKK!
HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA

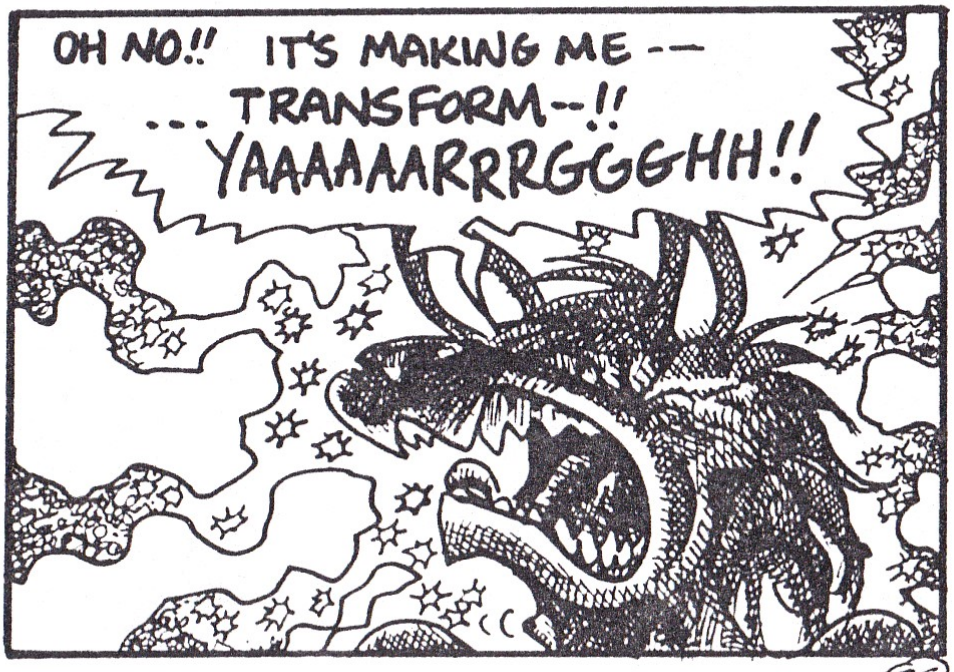

GASP!-NG! --
HERE, ZANOMANON!!
HAVE A FACEFULL!!
CRUSH!

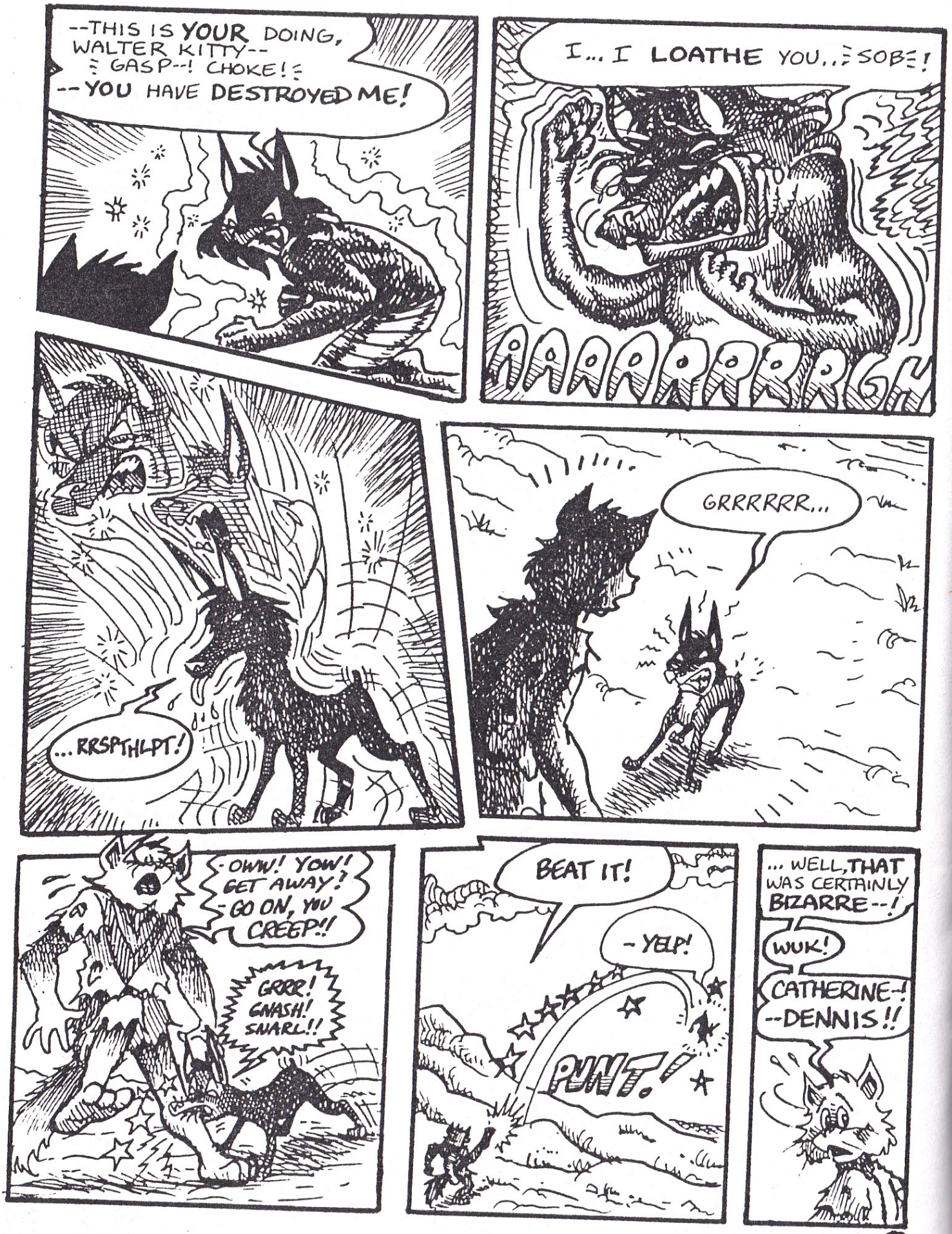

ARRRGGH!!

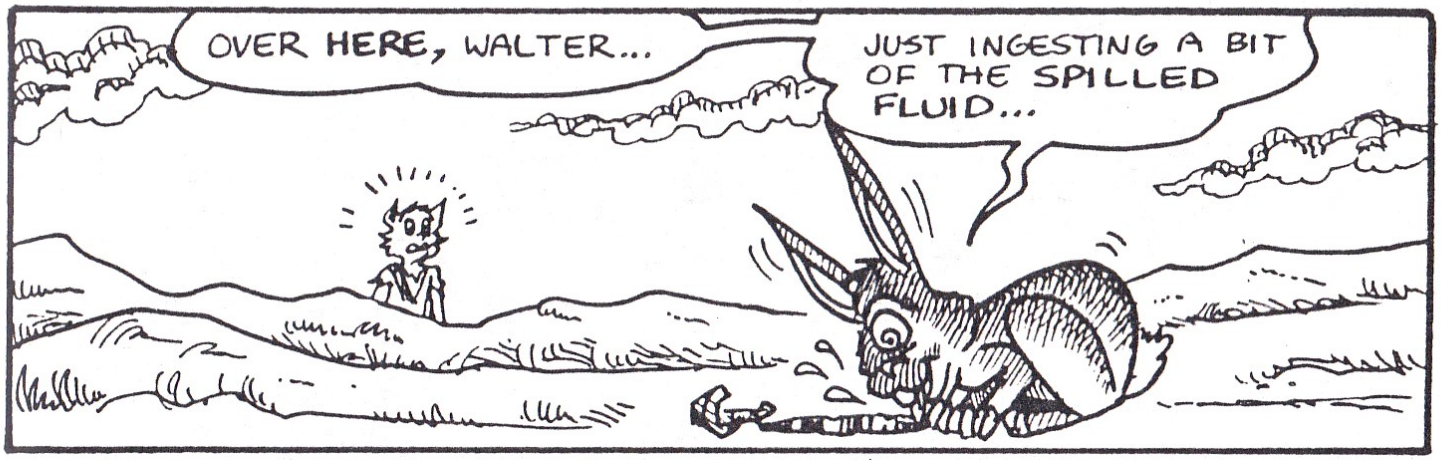

MY EYES!!
THE ACCURSED POTION--!!
OW! OW! OW!!
MY EYES!!
MY EYES!!

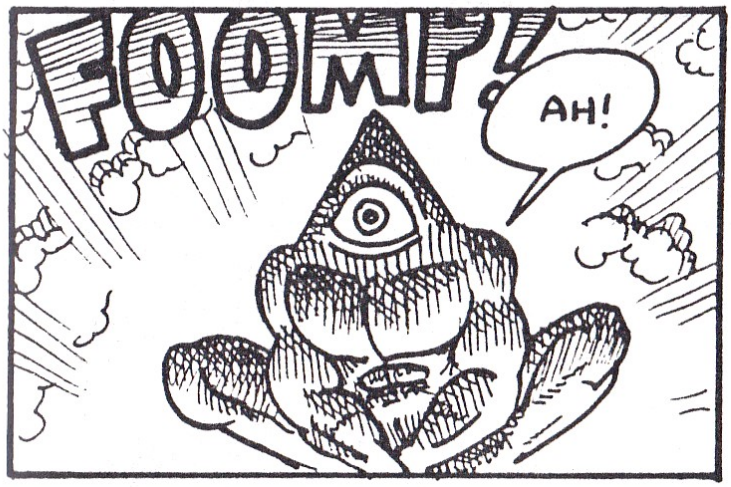
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE YOU STUPID FOOL?!
-I FEEL SO STRANGE!!

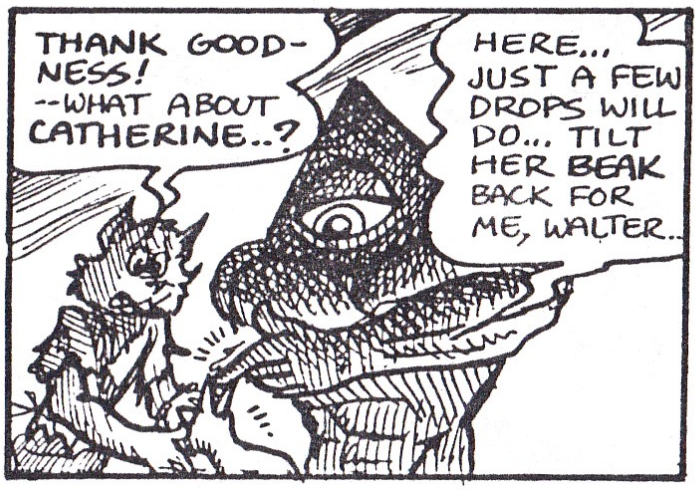
WHY AM I TINGLING LIKE THIS?! WHAT'S HAPPENING?


OH NO!! IT'S MAKING ME --
... TRANSFORM--!!
YAAAAAARRRGGGHH!!

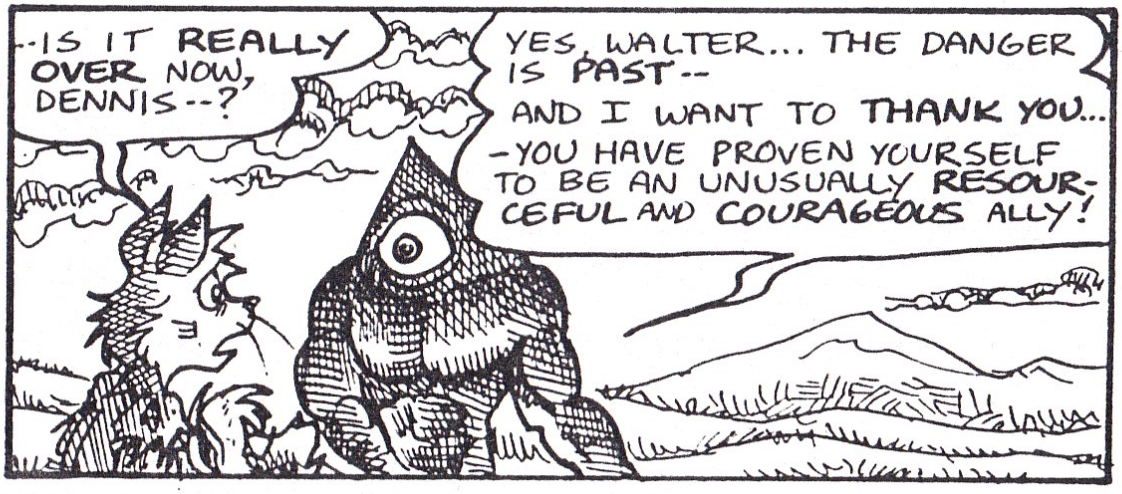

--THIS IS YOUR DOING, WALTER KITTY-- ≡ GASP--! CHOKE! ≡ --YOU HAVE DESTROYED ME!
I... I LOATHE YOU... ≡ SOB ≡!
AAAARRRRGH
...RRSPTHLPT!
GRRRRRR...
-OWW! YOW! GET AWAY! -GO ON, YOU CREEP!!
GRRR! GNASH! SNARL!!
BEAT IT!
-YELP!
PUNT!
... WELL, THAT WAS CERTAINLY BIZARRE--!
WUK!
CATHERINE--! --DENNIS!!

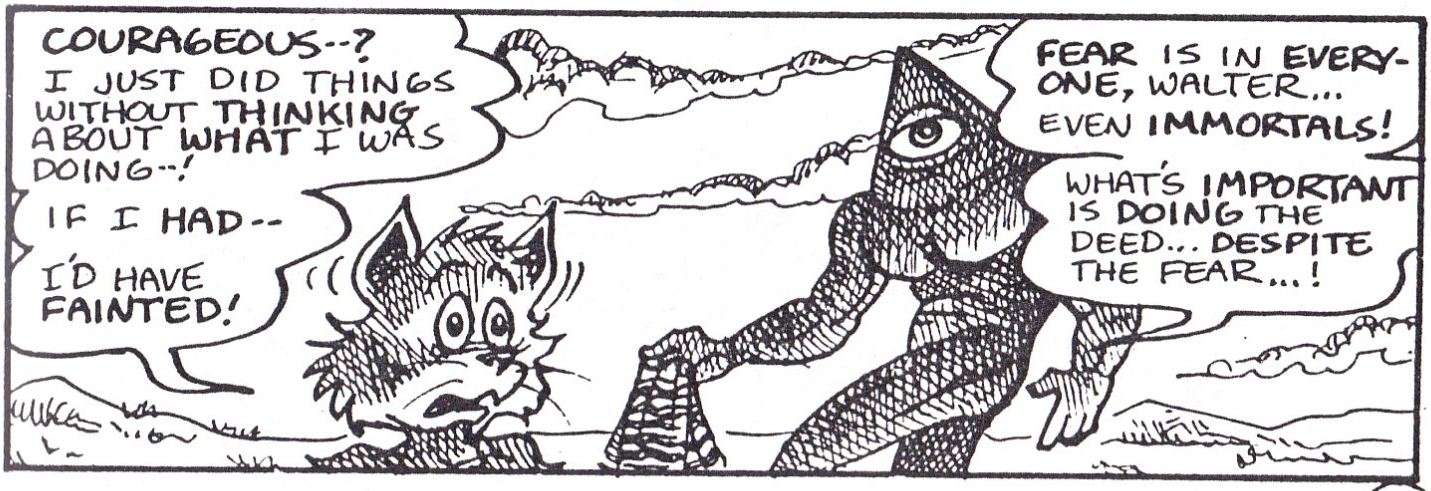

OVER HERE, WALTER...
JUST INGESTING A BIT OF THE SPILLED FLUID...

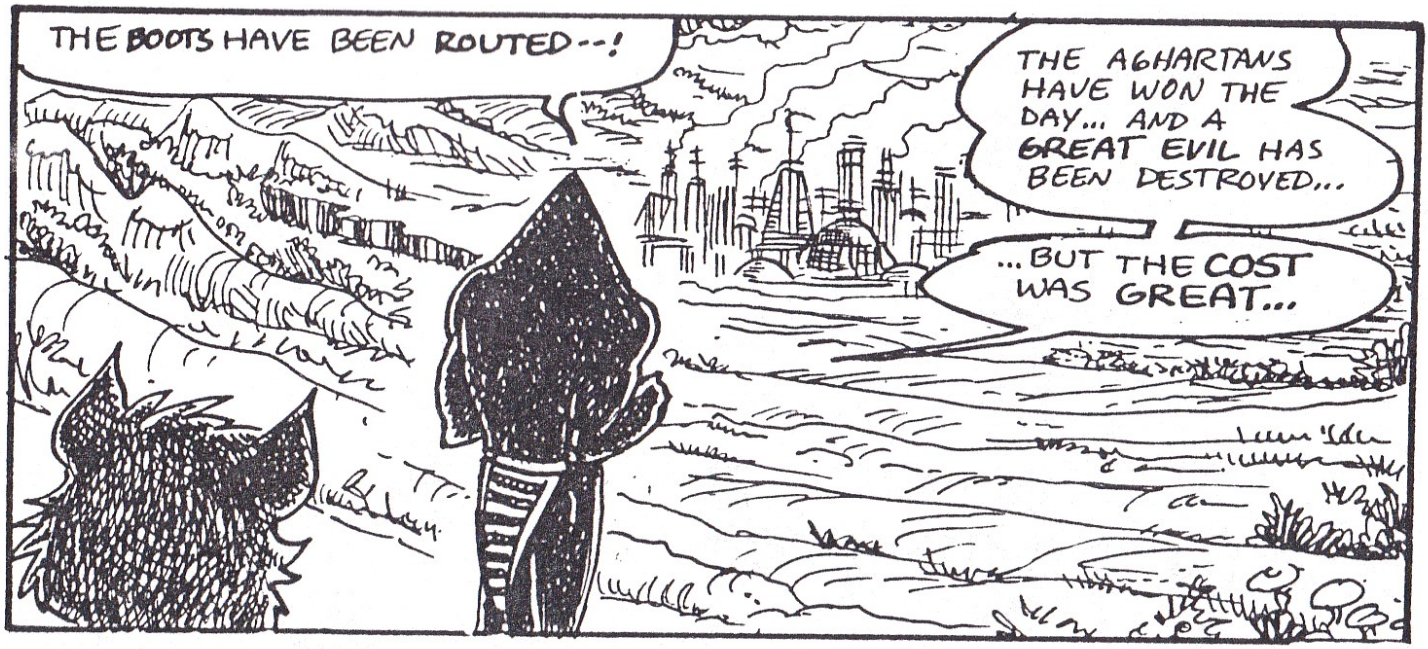

FOOMP!
AH!

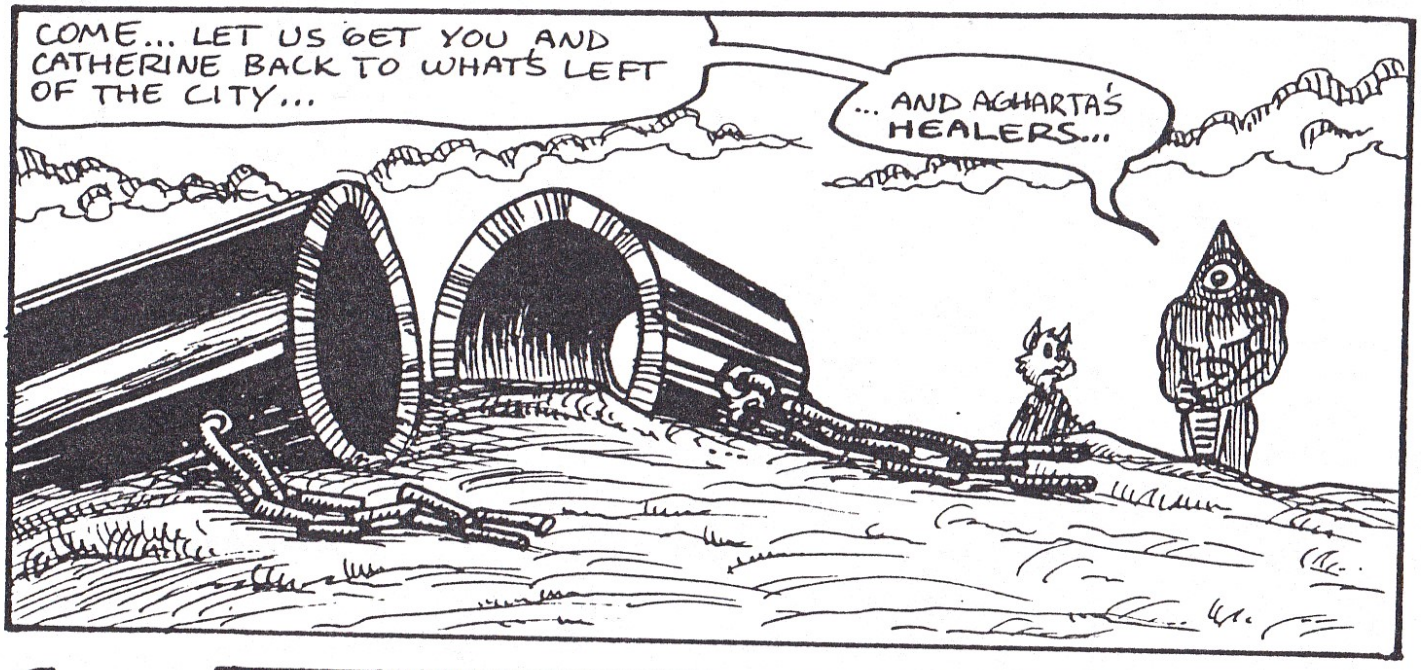

THANK GOOD-NESS! --WHAT ABOUT CATHERINE..?
HERE... JUST A FEW DROPS WILL DO... TILT HER BEAK BACK FOR ME, WALTER..

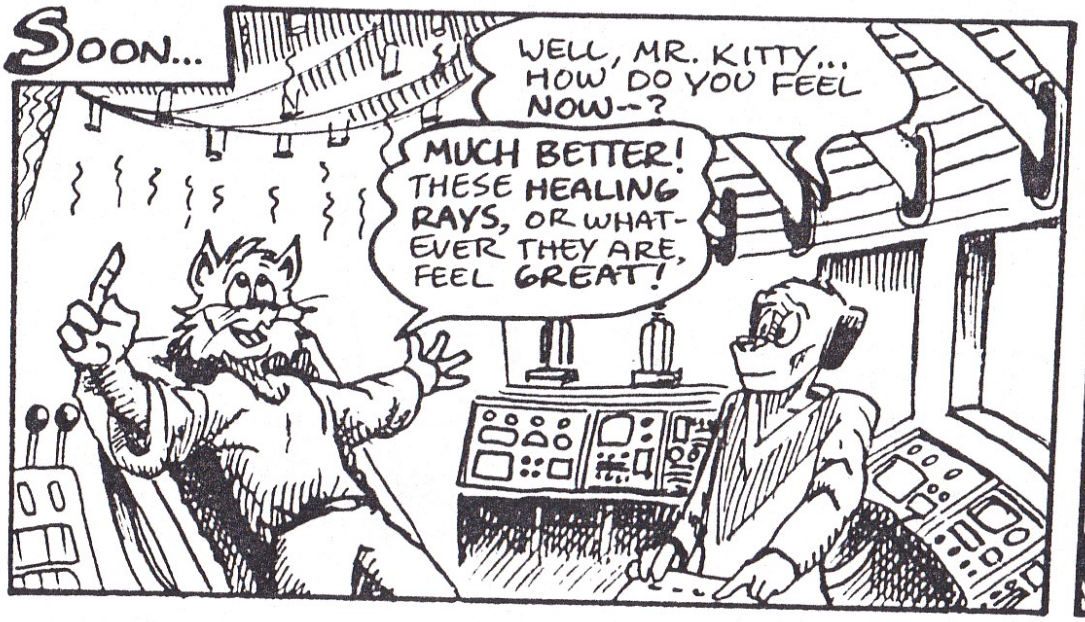
CATHERINE! - WHEW!
FOMP


--IS IT REALLY OVER NOW, DENNIS--?
YES, WALTER... THE DANGER IS PAST--
AND I WANT TO THANK YOU...
-YOU HAVE PROVEN YOURSELF TO BE AN UNUSUALLY RESOUR-CEFUL AND COURAGEOUS ALLY!

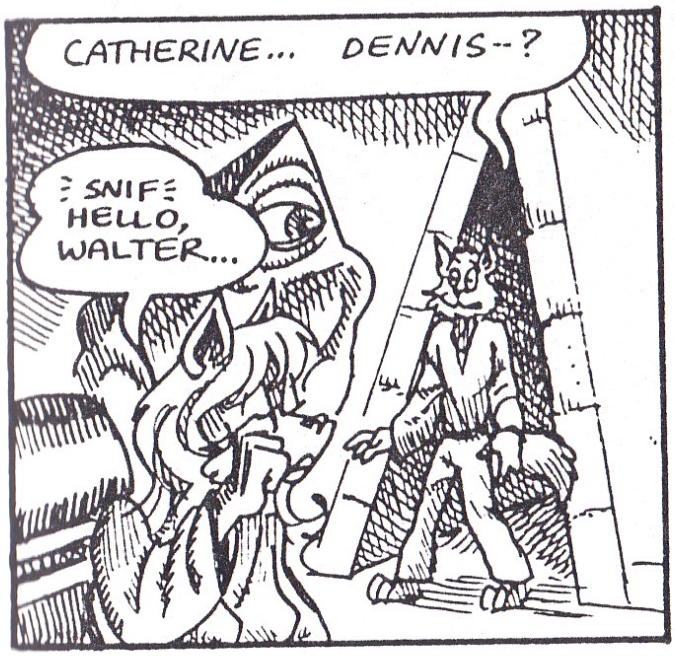

COURAGEOUS--?
I JUST DID THINGS WITHOUT THINKING ABOUT WHAT I WAS DOING--!
IF I HAD--
I'D HAVE FAINTED!
FEAR IS IN EVERY-ONE, WALTER... EVEN IMMORTALS!
WHAT'S IMPORTANT IS DOING THE DEED... DESPITE THE FEAR...!

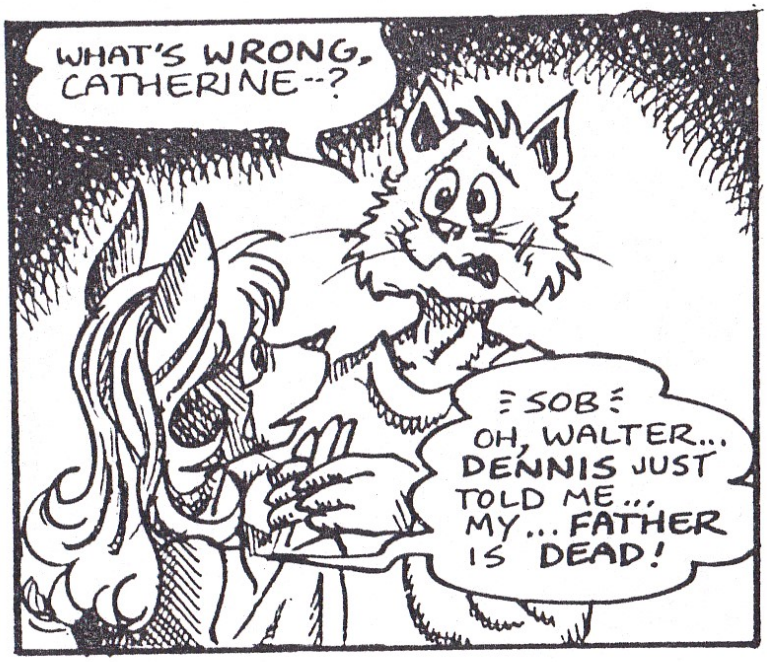

THE BOOTS HAVE BEEN ROUTED--!
THE AGHARTANS HAVE WON THE DAY... AND A GREAT EVIL HAS BEEN DESTROYED...
...BUT THE COST WAS GREAT...

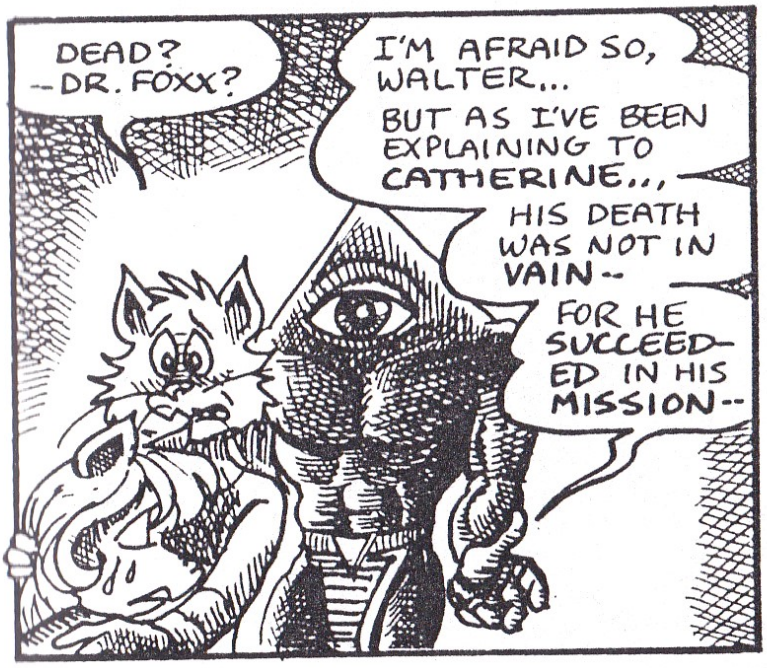

COME... LET US GET YOU AND CATHERINE BACK TO WHAT'S LEFT OF THE CITY...
...AND AGHARTA'S HEALERS...

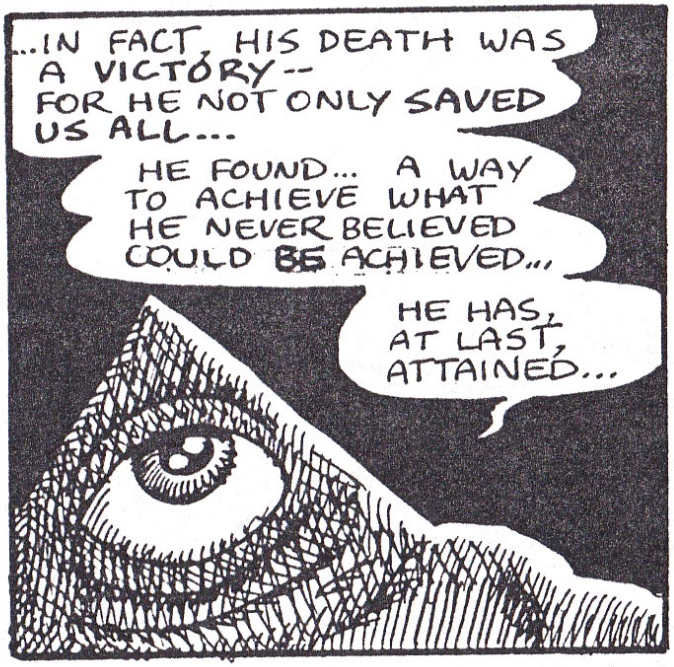

SOON...
WELL, MR. KITTY... HOW DO YOU FEEL NOW--?
MUCH BETTER! THESE HEALING RAYS, OR WHATEVER THEY ARE, FEEL GREAT!

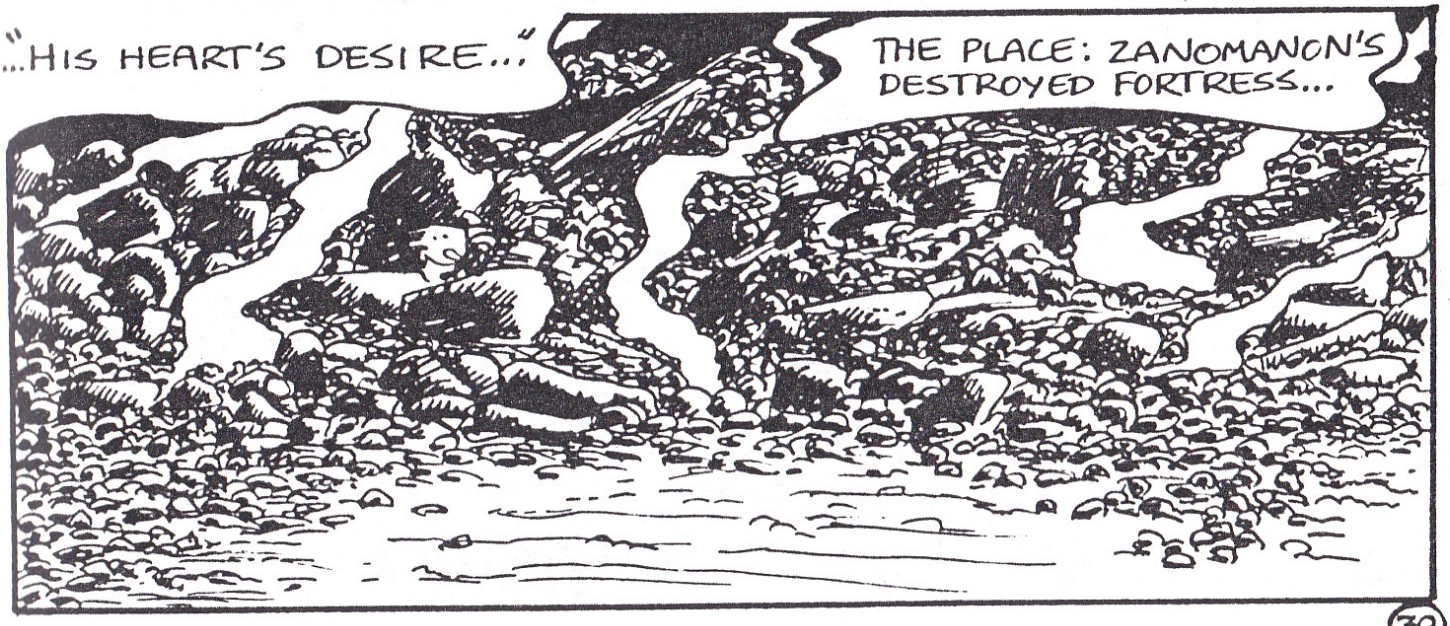
CAN I SEE CATHERINE NOW--?
I THINK SO...


CATHERINE... DENNIS--?
:SNIF: HELLO, WALTER...

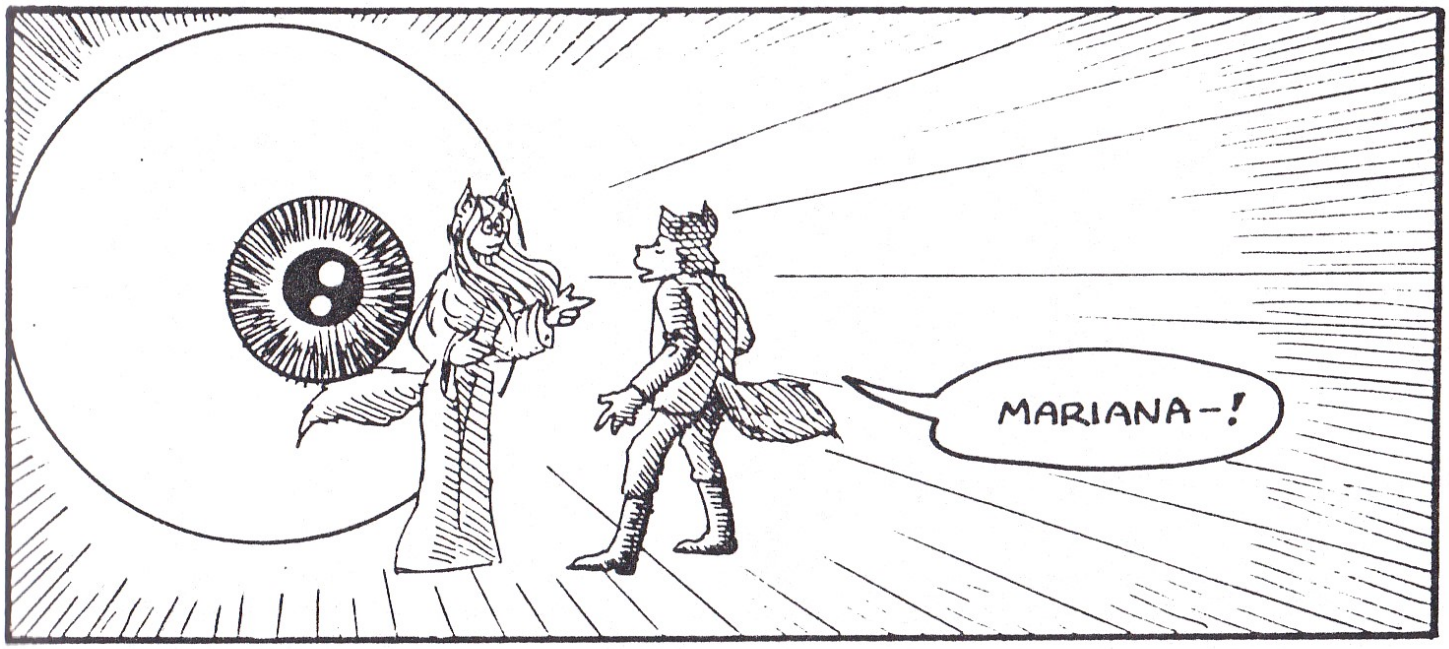

WHAT'S WRONG, CATHERINE--?
:SOB: OH, WALTER... DENNIS JUST TOLD ME... MY... FATHER IS DEAD!

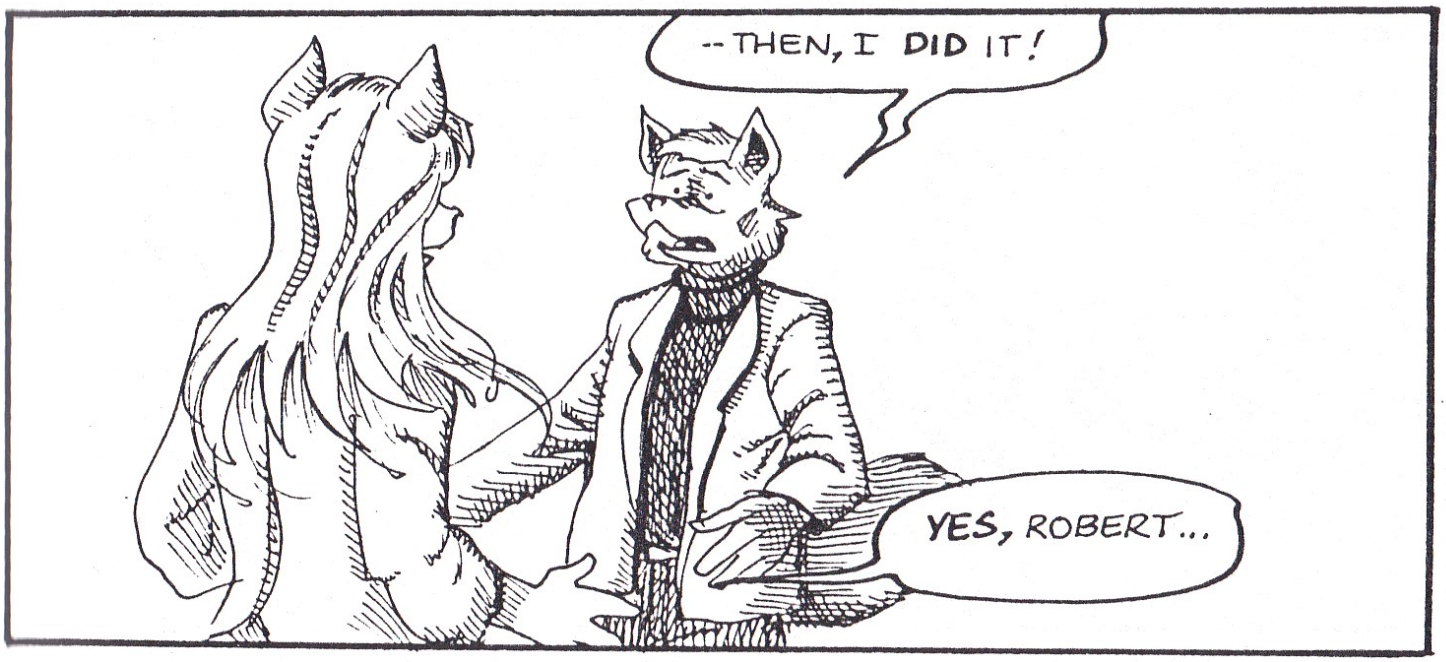

DEAD? --DR. FOXX?
I'M AFRAID SO, WALTER...
BUT AS I'VE BEEN EXPLAINING TO CATHERINE...
HIS DEATH WAS NOT IN VAIN--
FOR HE SUCCEEDED IN HIS MISSION--

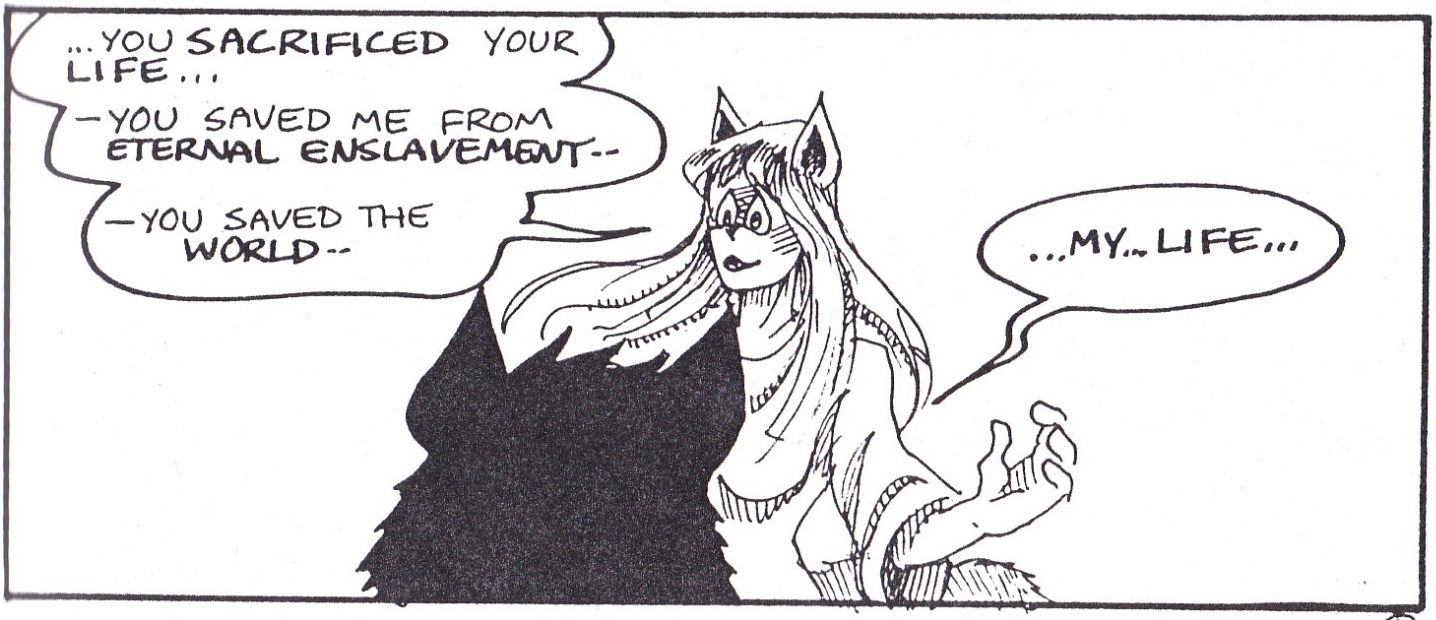

...IN FACT, HIS DEATH WAS A VICTORY-- FOR HE NOT ONLY SAVED US ALL...
HE FOUND... A WAY TO ACHIEVE WHAT HE NEVER BELIEVED COULD BE ACHIEVED...
HE HAS, AT LAST, ATTAINED...

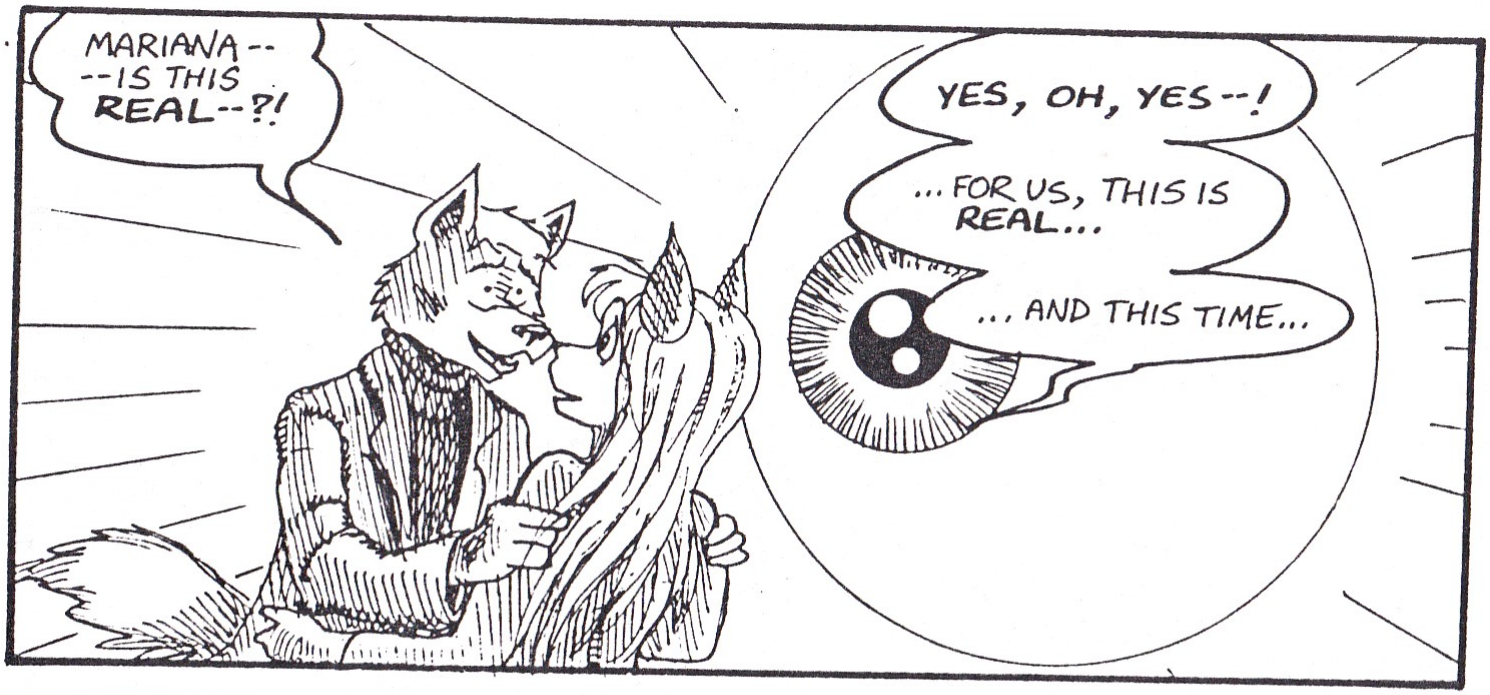

"...HIS HEART'S DESIRE..."
THE PLACE: ZANOMANON'S DESTROYED FORTRESS...

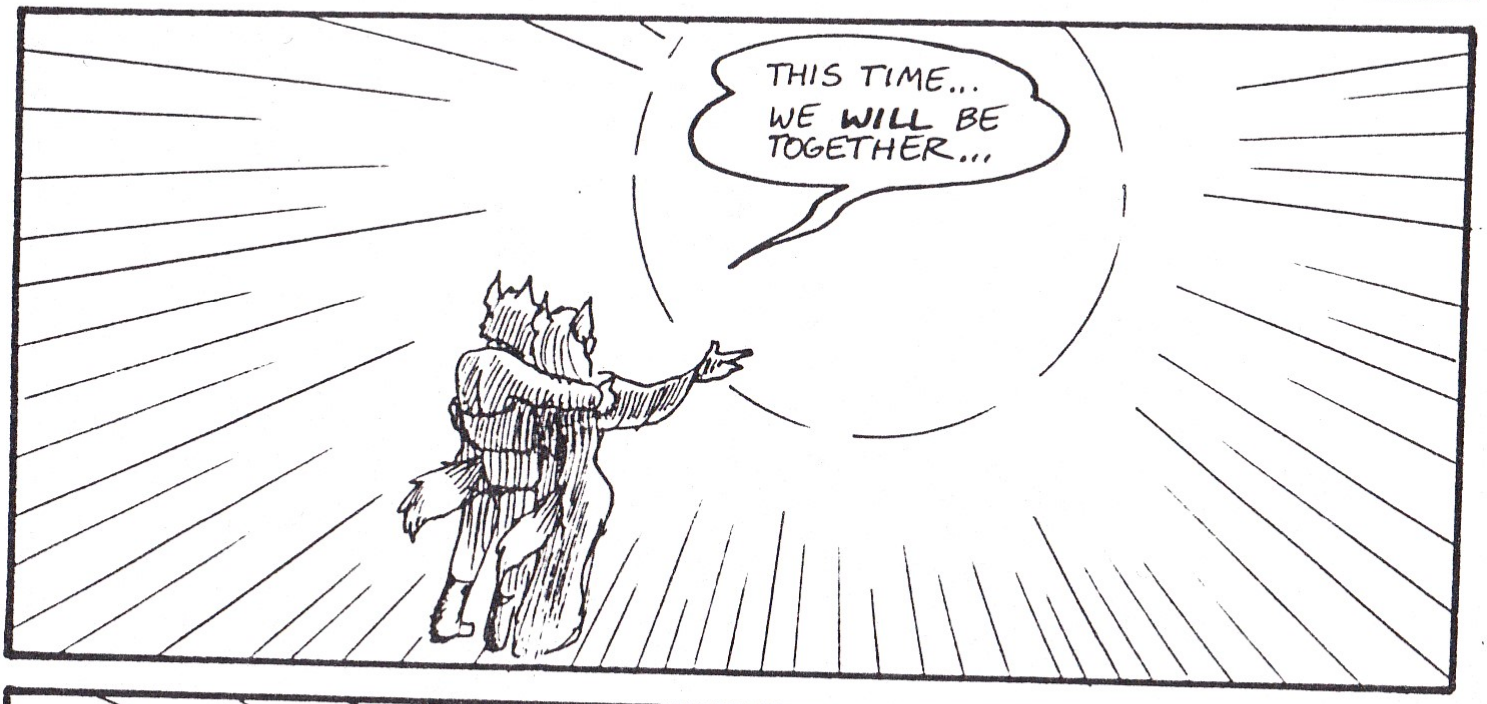
DEEP INSIDE THE RUBBLE...
ROBERT...

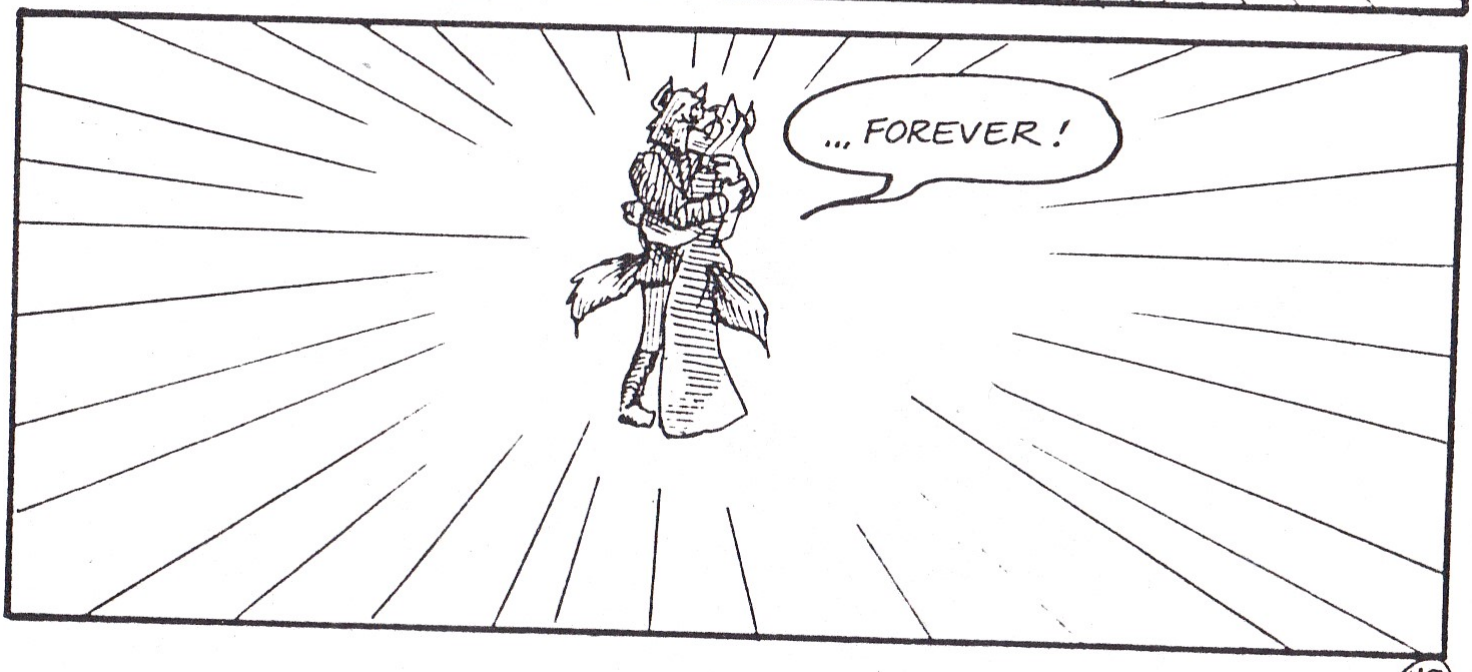

MARIANA-!

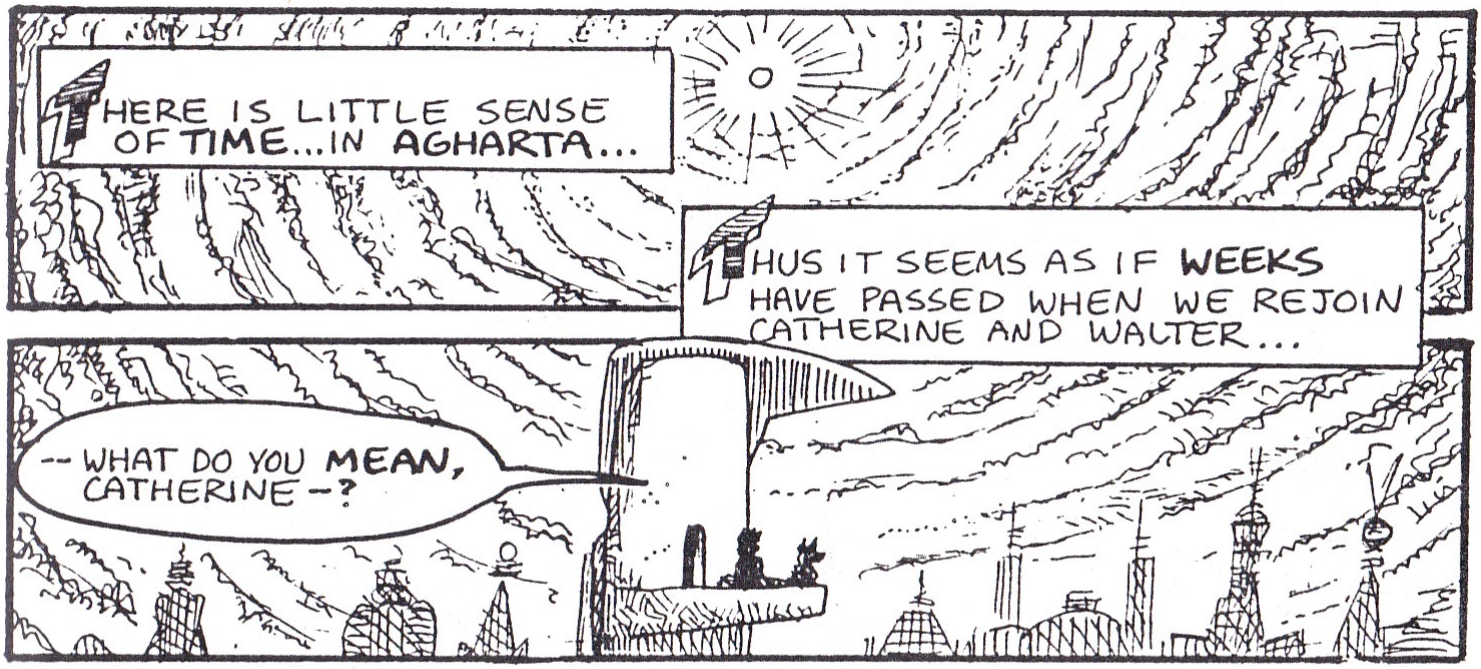

--THEN, I DID IT!
YES, ROBERT...

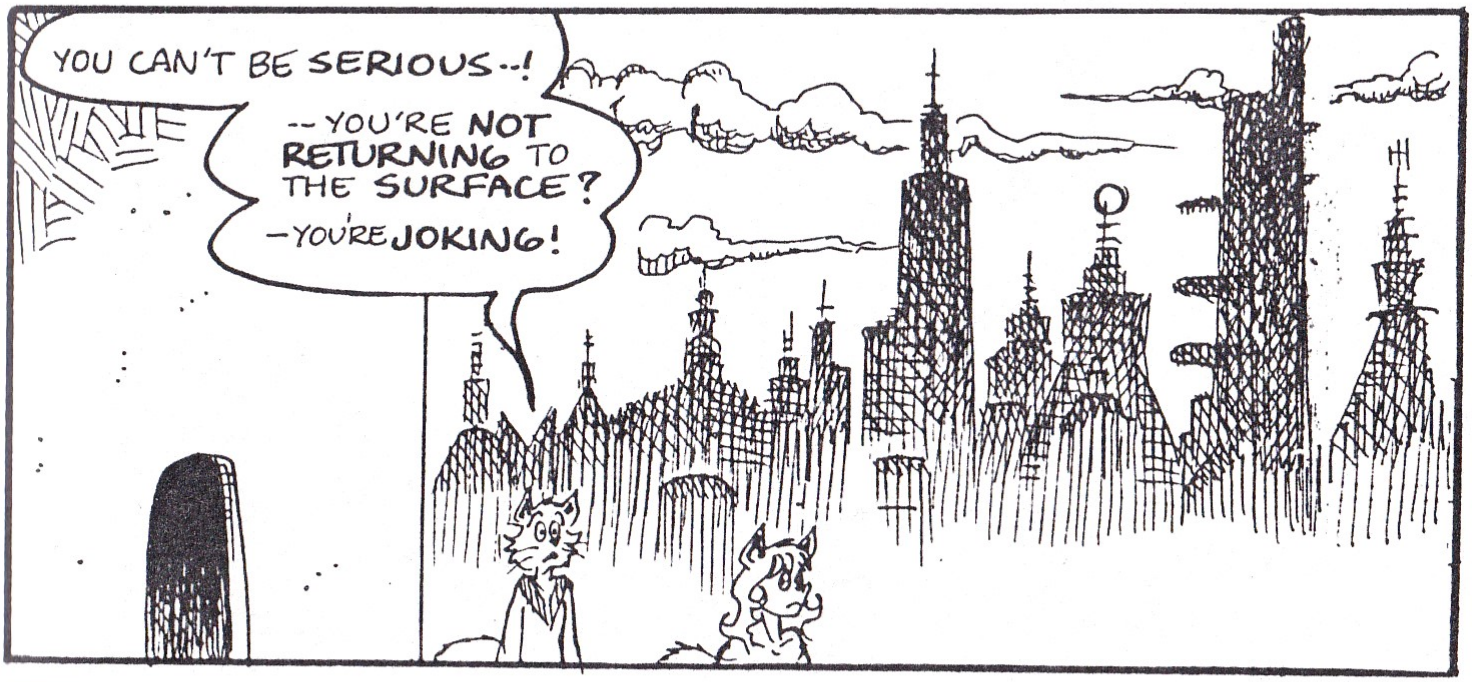

...YOU SACRIFICED YOUR LIFE...
-YOU SAVED ME FROM ETERNAL ENSLAVEMENT--
-YOU SAVED THE WORLD--
...MY... LIFE...


MARIANA--
--IS THIS
REAL--?!
YES, OH, YES--!
... FOR US, THIS IS
REAL...
... AND THIS TIME...

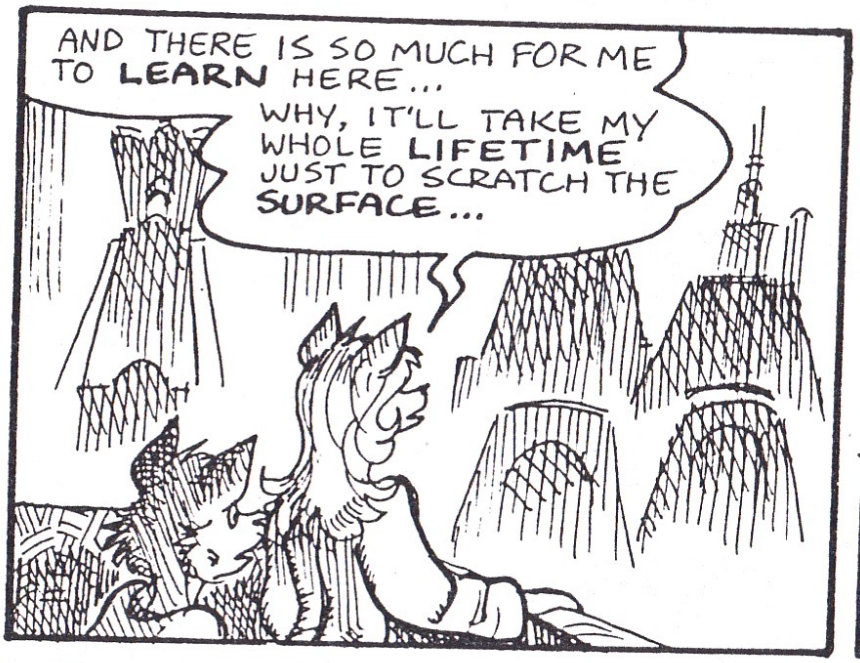

THIS TIME...
WE WILL BE
TOGETHER...

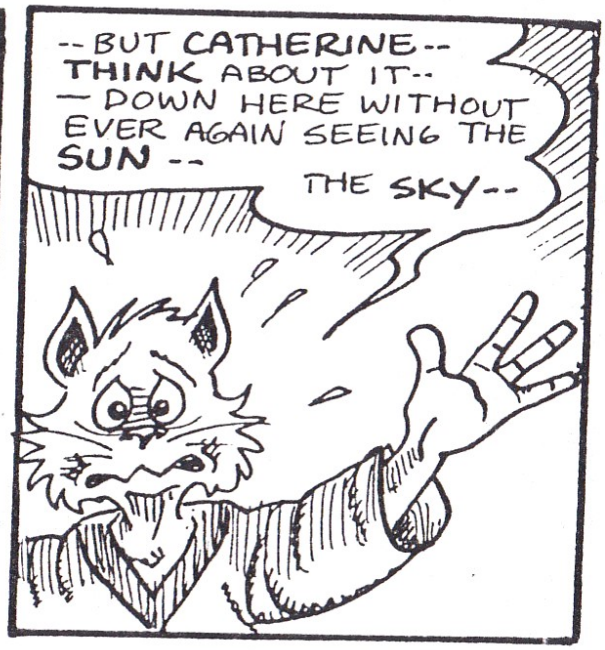

... FOREVER!

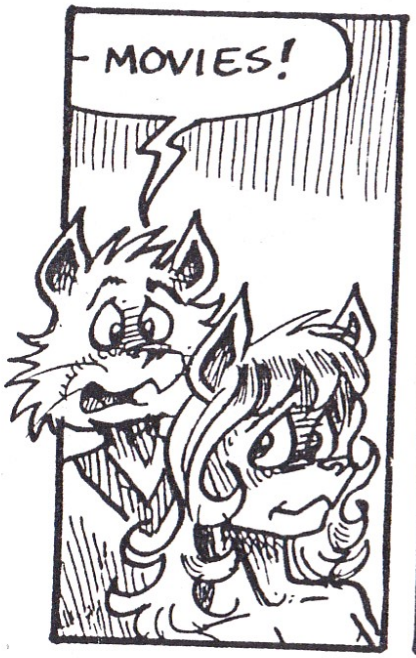

THERE IS LITTLE SENSE OF TIME...IN AGHARTA...
THUS IT SEEMS AS IF WEEKS HAVE PASSED WHEN WE REJOIN CATHERINE AND WALTER...
--WHAT DO YOU MEAN, CATHERINE--?

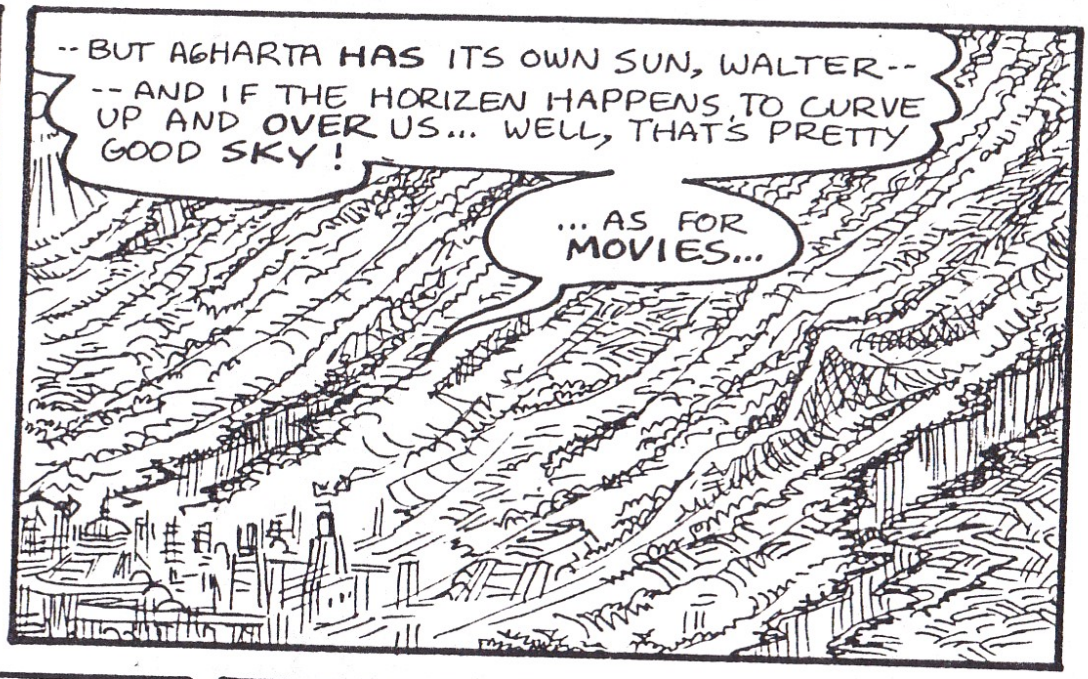

YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS--!
--YOU'RE NOT RETURNING TO THE SURFACE?
--YOU'RE JOKING!

NO... NO, I'M NOT JOKING, WALTER...
...THE PEOPLE HERE... THEY'RE MY PEOPLE...
THEY RELY ON THE SOURCE SO MUCH...
THEY NEED ME...

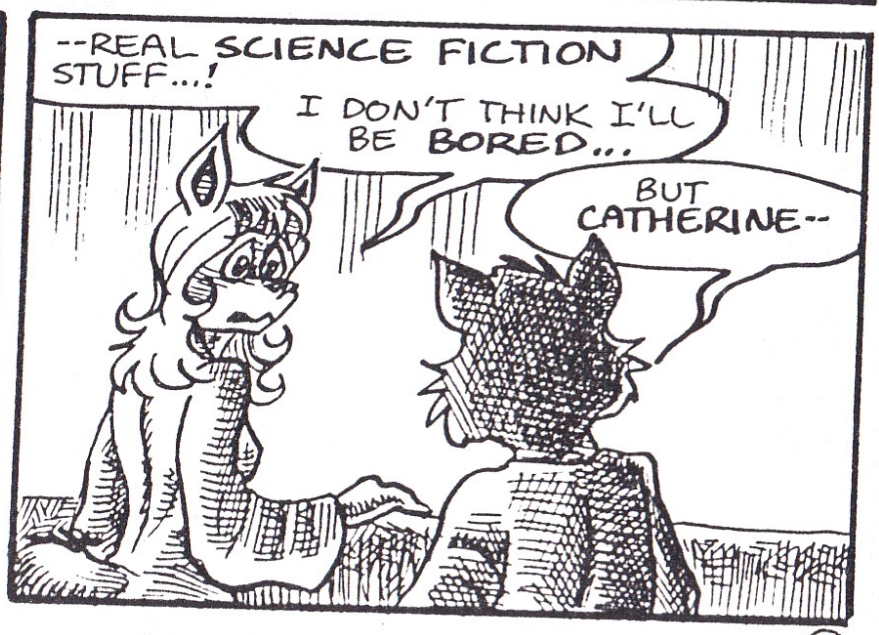

AND THERE IS SO MUCH FOR ME TO LEARN HERE...
WHY, IT'LL TAKE MY WHOLE LIFETIME JUST TO SCRATCH THE SURFACE...

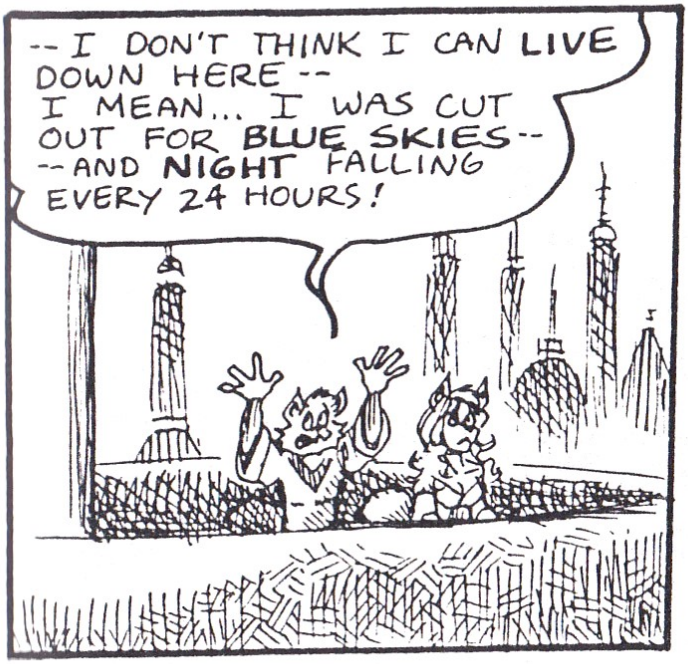

--BUT CATHERINE-- THINK ABOUT IT-- — DOWN HERE WITHOUT EVER AGAIN SEEING THE SUN --
THE SKY--

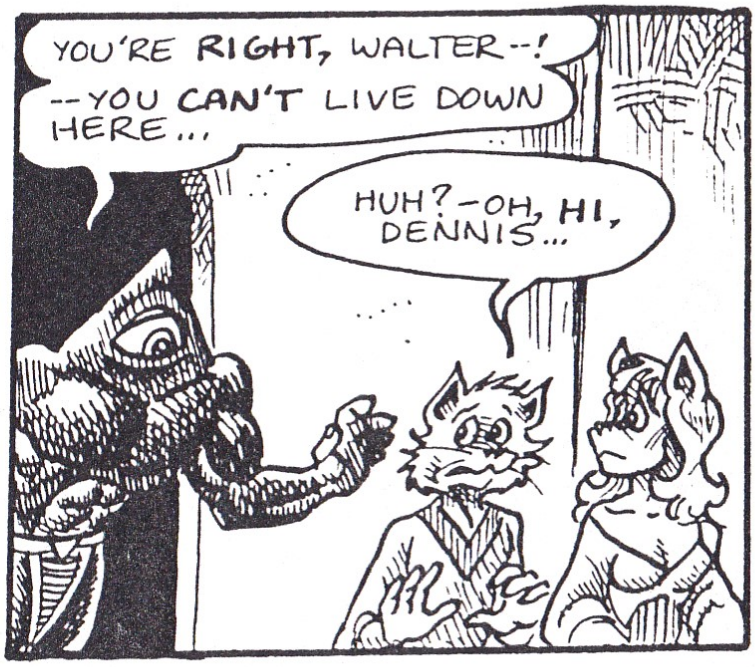

MOVIES!

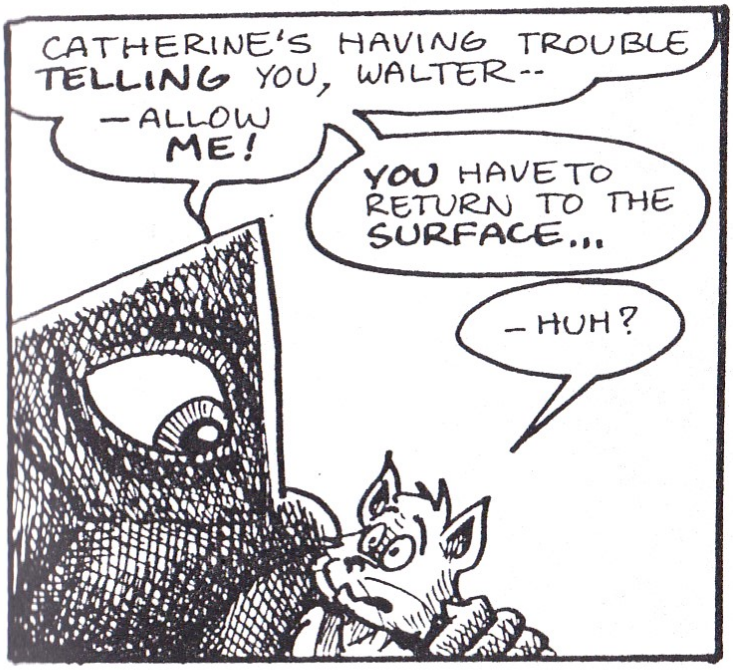

--BUT AGHARTA HAS ITS OWN SUN, WALTER-- --AND IF THE HORIZEN HAPPENS TO CURVE UP AND OVER US... WELL, THAT'S PRETTY GOOD SKY!
... AS FOR MOVIES...

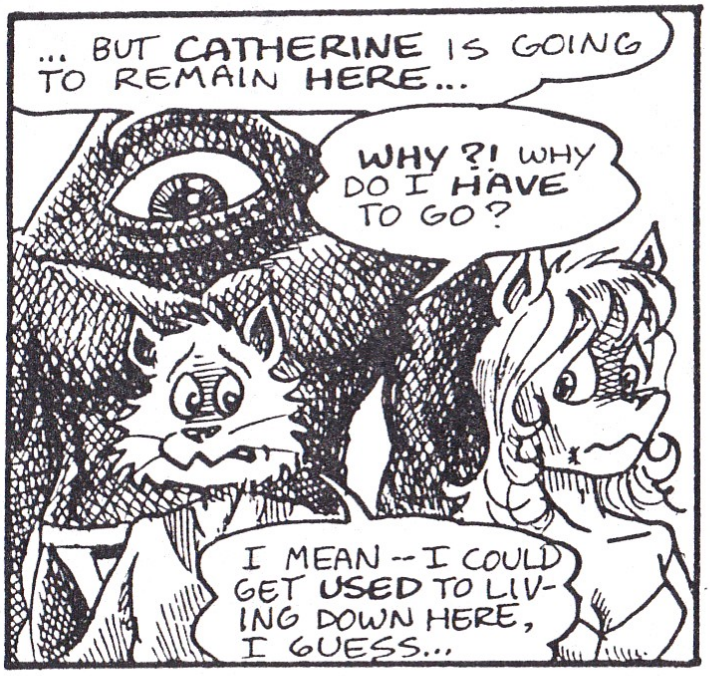
...I'M TOLD THE AGHARTANS HAVE SOME VERY INTERESTING FORMS OF ENTERTAINMENT--!

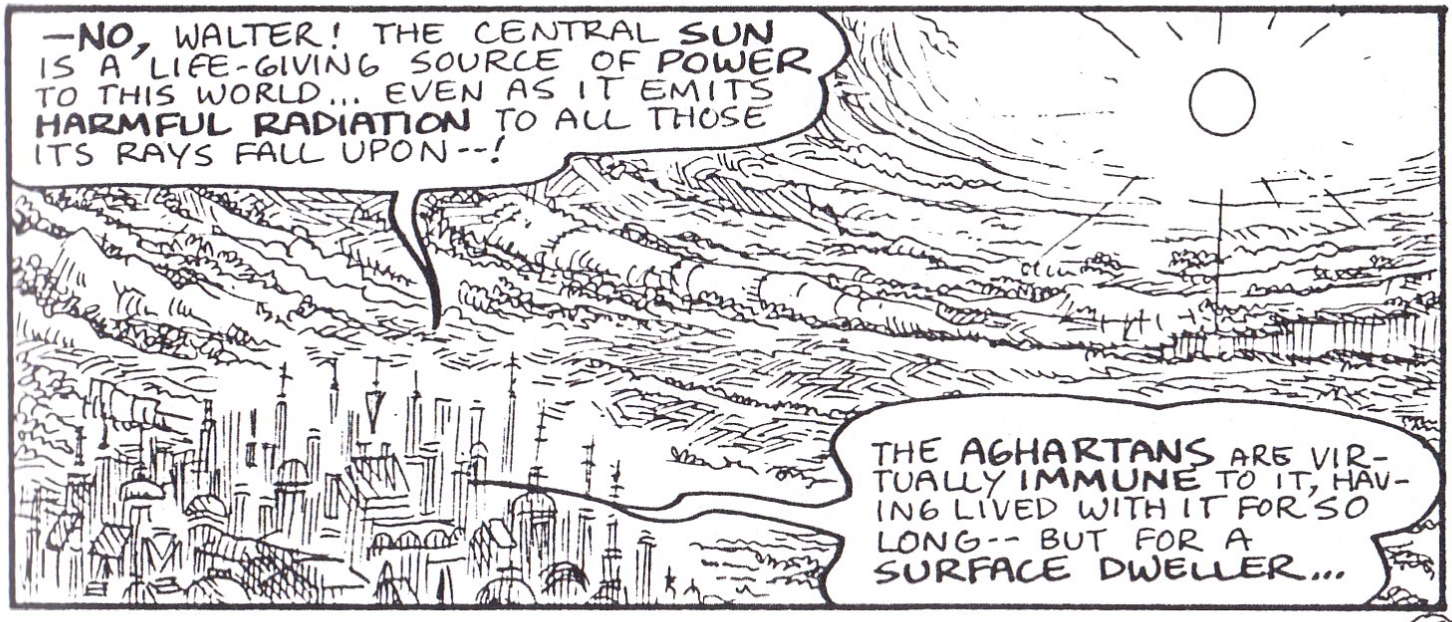

--REAL SCIENCE FICTION STUFF...!
I DON'T THINK I'LL BE BORED...
BUT CATHERINE--

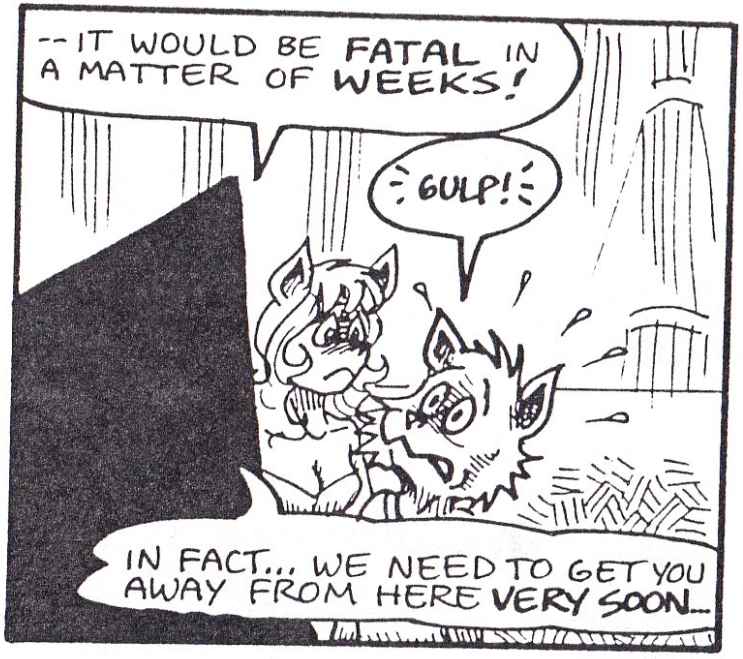

--I DON'T THINK I CAN LIVE DOWN HERE-- I MEAN... I WAS CUT OUT FOR BLUE SKIES-- --AND NIGHT FALLING EVERY 24 HOURS!


YOU'RE RIGHT, WALTER--! --YOU CAN'T LIVE DOWN HERE...
HUH?-OH, HI, DENNIS...

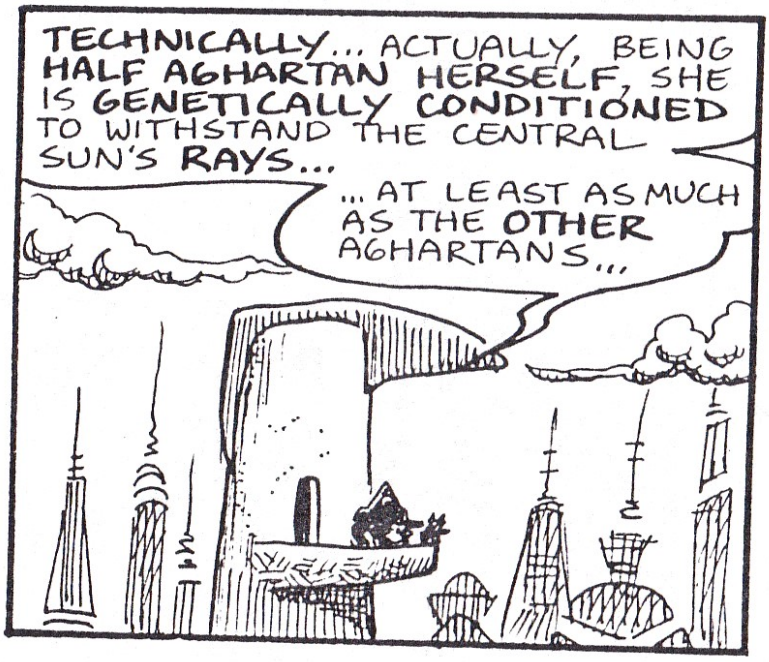

CATHERINE'S HAVING TROUBLE TELLING YOU, WALTER--
-ALLOW ME!
YOU HAVE TO RETURN TO THE SURFACE...
-HUH?

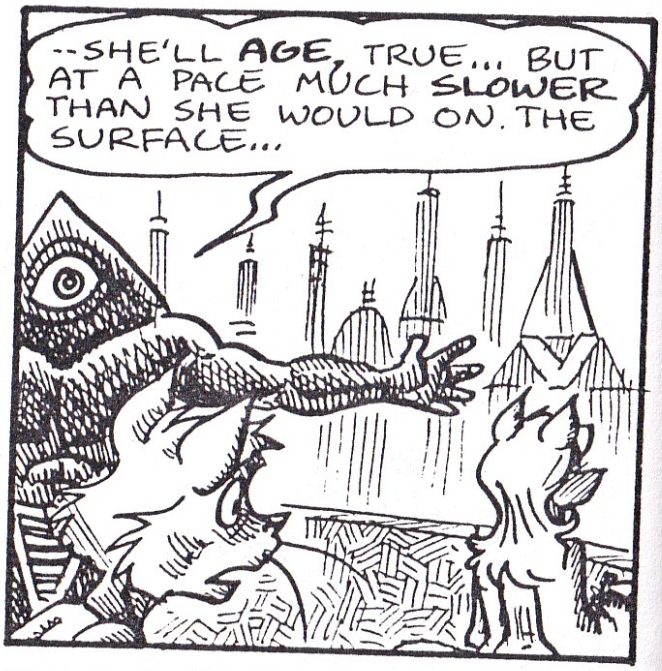

... BUT CATHERINE IS GOING TO REMAIN HERE...
WHY?! WHY DO I HAVE TO GO?
I MEAN--I COULD GET USED TO LIVING DOWN HERE, I GUESS...


-NO, WALTER! THE CENTRAL SUN IS A LIFE-GIVING SOURCE OF POWER TO THIS WORLD... EVEN AS IT EMITS HARMFUL RADIATION TO ALL THOSE ITS RAYS FALL UPON--!
THE AGHARTANS ARE VIRTUALLY IMMUNE TO IT, HAVING LIVED WITH IT FOR SO LONG-- BUT FOR A SURFACE DWELLER...


--IT WOULD BE FATAL IN A MATTER OF WEEKS!
GULP!
IN FACT... WE NEED TO GET YOU AWAY FROM HERE VERY SOON...

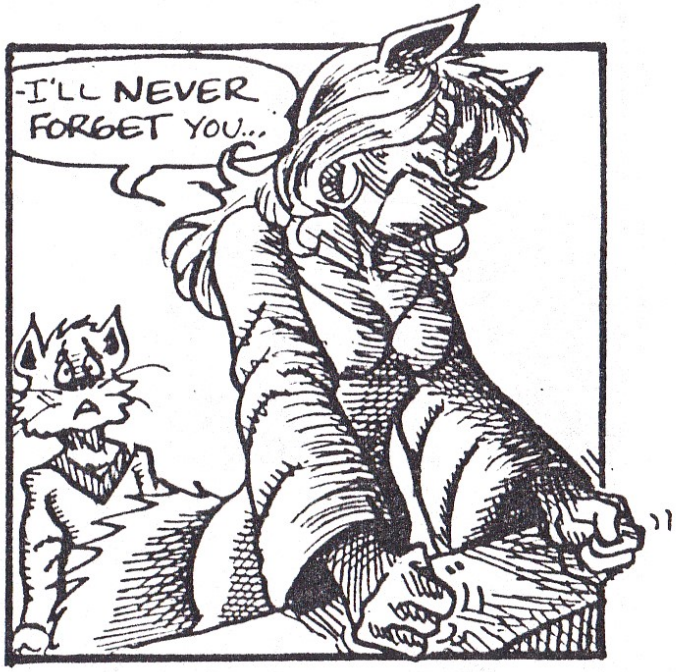
...OR ELSE YOU'LL HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO ITS RAYS TOO MUCH ALREADY--!
B-BUT CATHERINE IS A SURFACE DWELLER TOO--

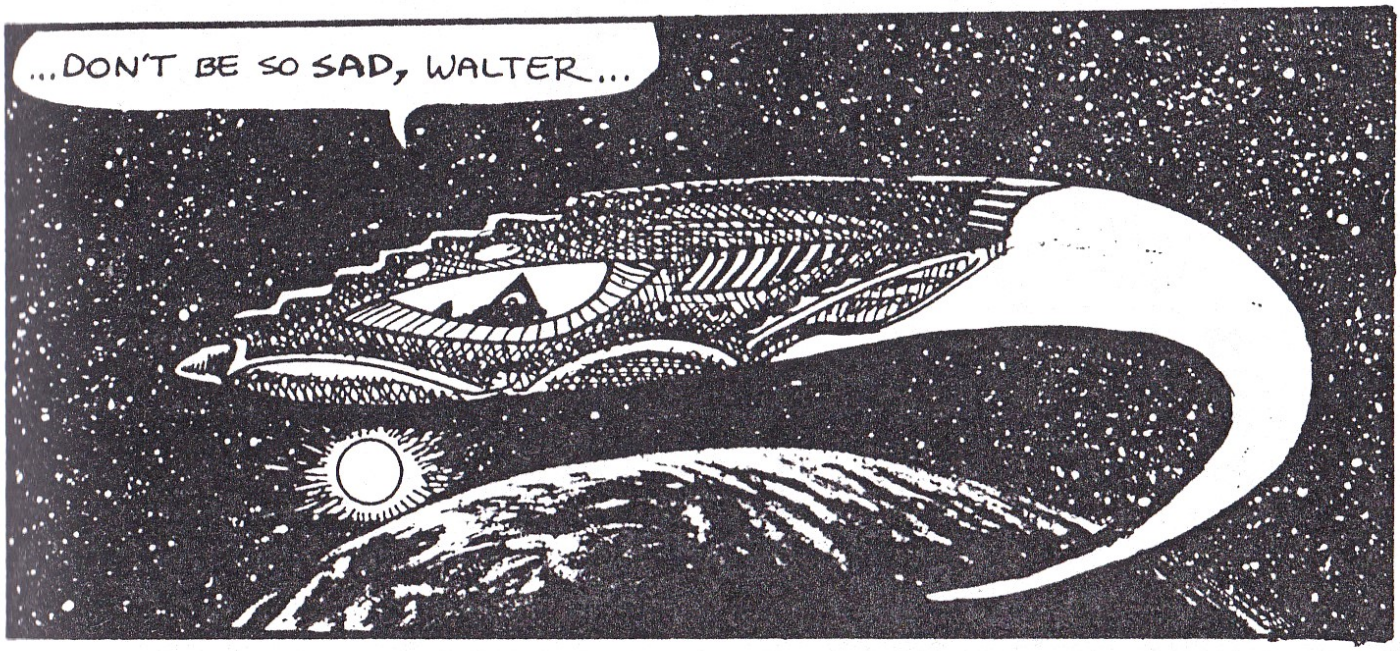

TECHNICALLY... ACTUALLY, BEING HALF AGHARTAN HERSELF, SHE IS GENETICALLY CONDITIONED TO WITHSTAND THE CENTRAL SUN'S RAYS...
...AT LEAST AS MUCH AS THE OTHER AGHARTANS...


--SHE'LL AGE, TRUE... BUT AT A PACE MUCH SLOWER THAN SHE WOULD ON THE SURFACE...

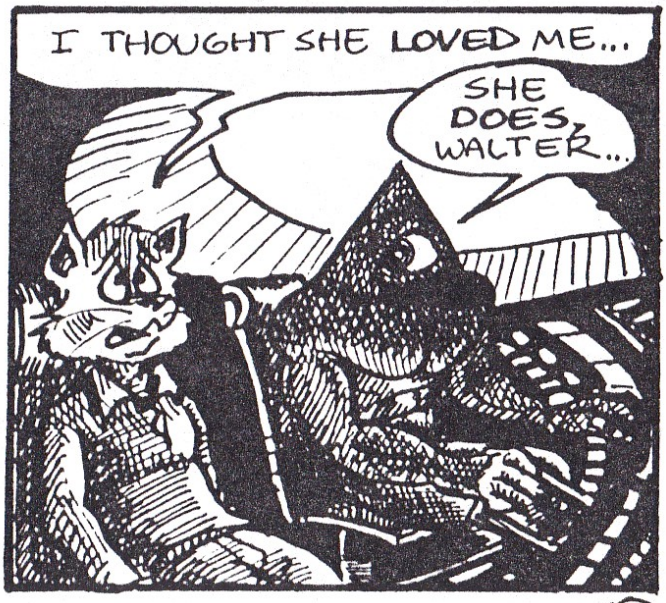
CATHERINE-- D-DON'T YOU-- FEEL... SOMETHING FOR ME--?
—I RISKED MY LIFE FOR YOU!!
DON'T MAKE IT HARDER FOR HER, WALTER...

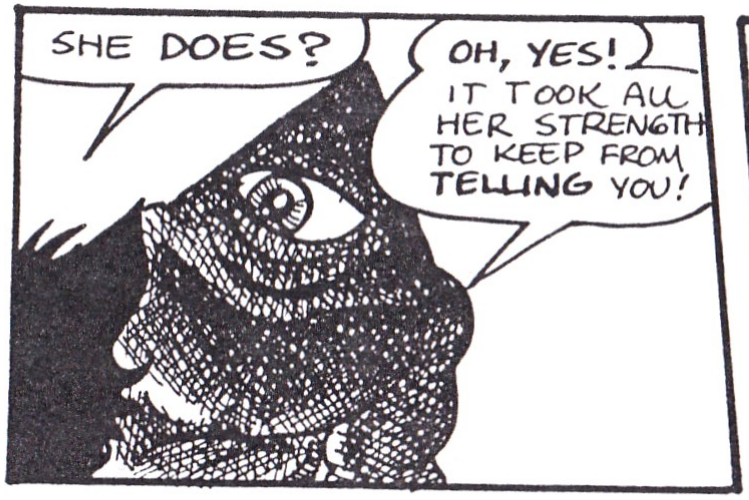
YOU... YOU REALLY DON'T LOVE ME --?
WALTER, I...


-I'LL NEVER FORGET YOU...

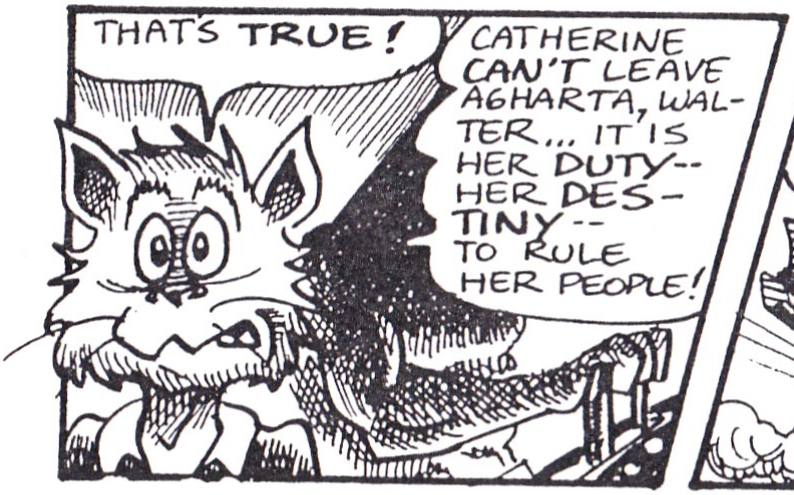

...DON'T BE SO SAD, WALTER...

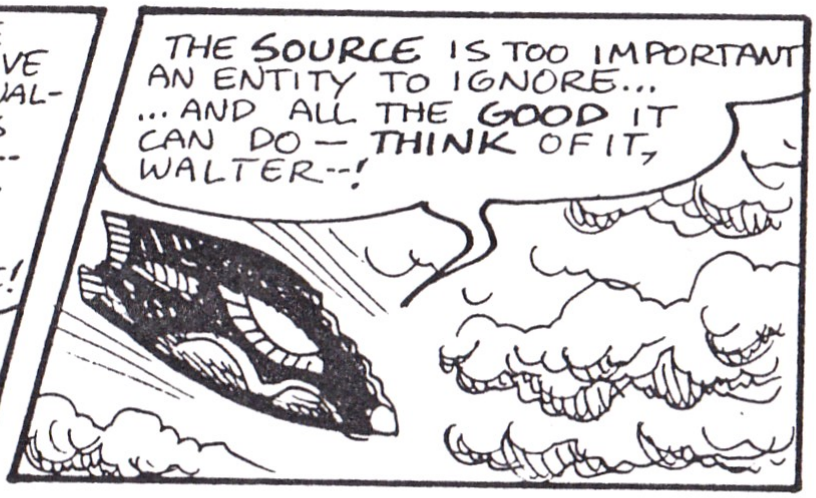
I JUST LOST THE LOVE OF MY LIFE, AND YOU SAY, DON'T BE SAD--

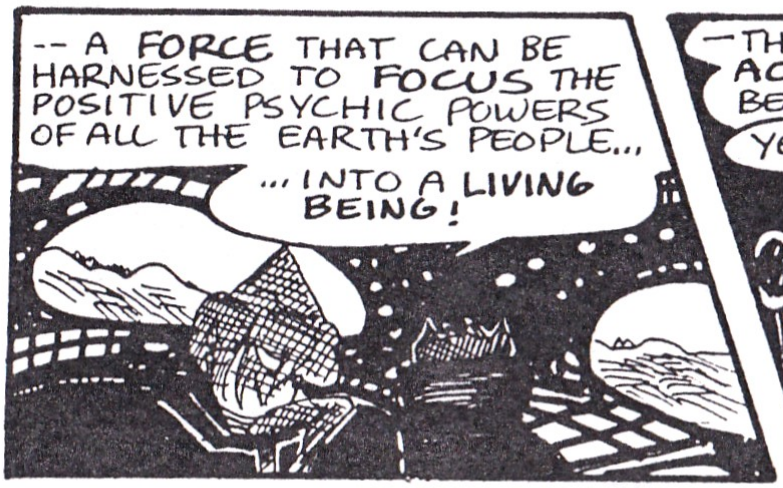

I THOUGHT SHE LOVED ME...
SHE DOES, WALTER...

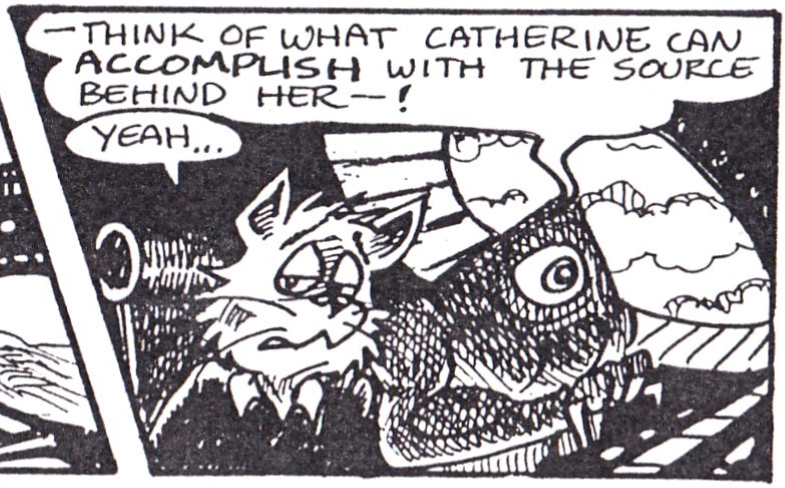

SHE DOES?
OH, YES! IT TOOK ALL HER STRENGTH TO KEEP FROM TELLING YOU!

BUT -- WHY--?
BECAUSE SHE KNEW YOU'D NEVER LEAVE AGHARTA WILLINGLY IF SHE DID!


THAT'S TRUE!
CATHERINE CAN'T LEAVE AGHARTA, WALTER... IT IS HER DUTY-- HER DESTINY-- TO RULE HER PEOPLE!


THE SOURCE IS TOO IMPORTANT AN ENTITY TO IGNORE... ... AND ALL THE GOOD IT CAN DO — THINK OF IT, WALTER--!

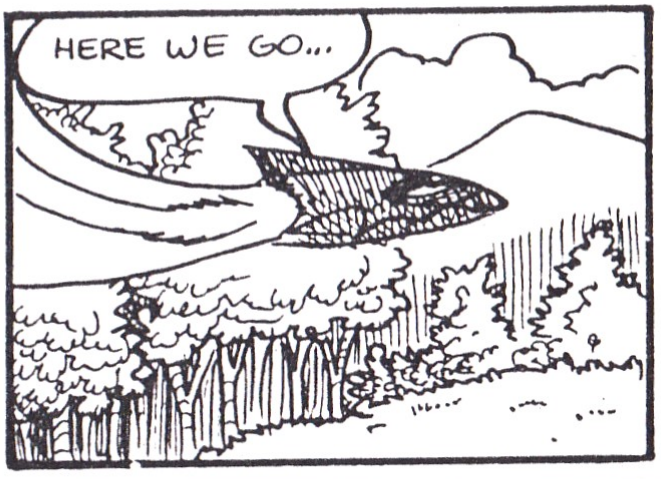

-- A FORCE THAT CAN BE HARNESSED TO FOCUS THE POSITIVE PSYCHIC POWERS OF ALL THE EARTH'S PEOPLE...
... INTO A LIVING BEING!

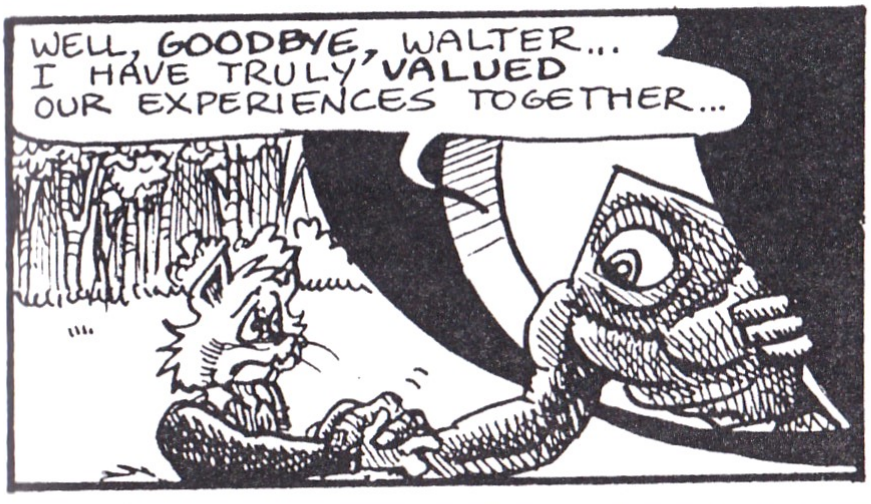

—THINK OF WHAT CATHERINE CAN ACCOMPLISH WITH THE SOURCE BEHIND HER—!
YEAH...

...YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT... I GUESS ME AND MY LITTLE PROBLEMS DON'T REALLY MEAN MUCH IN THE BIG PICTURE!
SIGH...

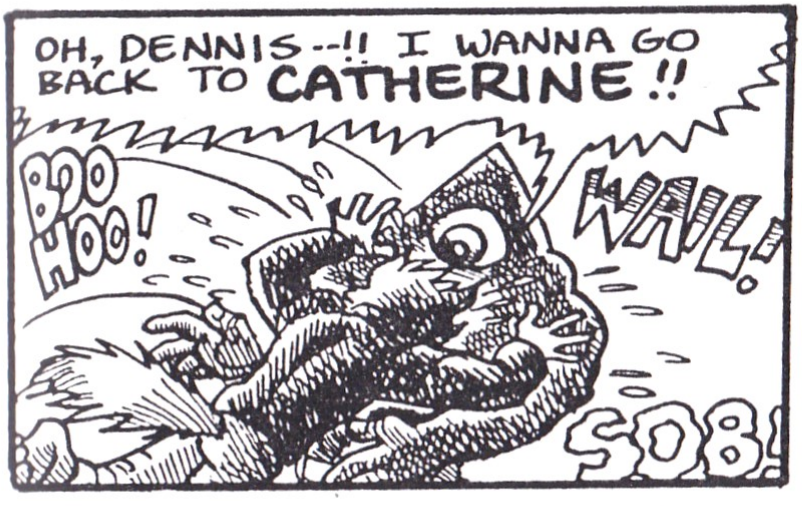
WE'RE NEAR ARKVILLE, WALTER...
GREAT!

WE'D BETTER NOT LAND TOO CLOSE TO TOWN, WALTER... YOU UNDERSTAND...

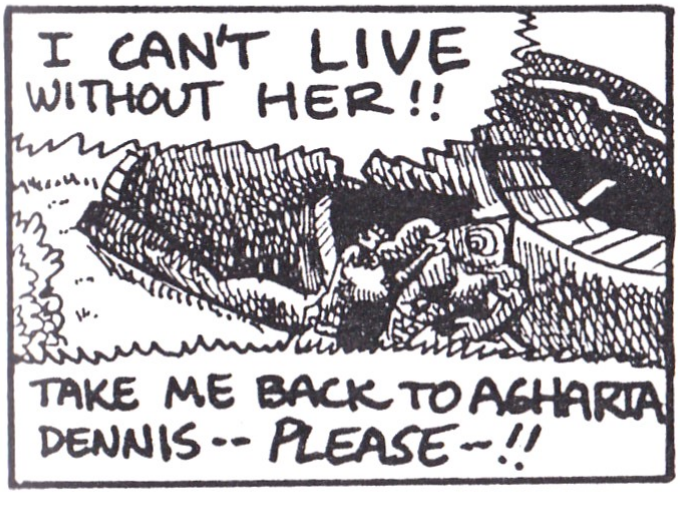

HERE WE GO...


WELL, GOODBYE, WALTER... I HAVE TRULY VALUED OUR EXPERIENCES TOGETHER...

CHOKE! ME TOO... DENNIS...
TREMBLE...
QUIVER...

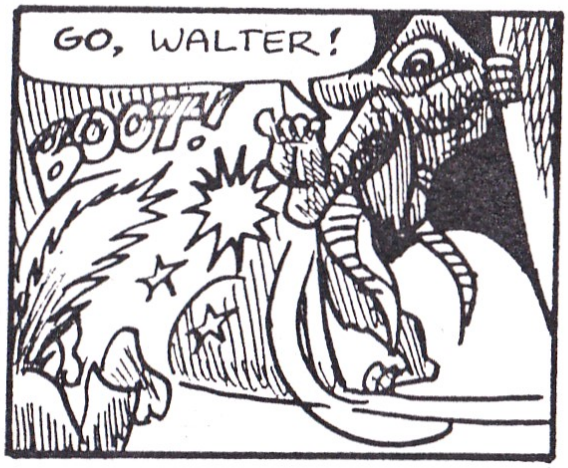

OH, DENNIS--!! I WANNA GO BACK TO CATHERINE!!
BOO HOO!
WAIL!
SOB!

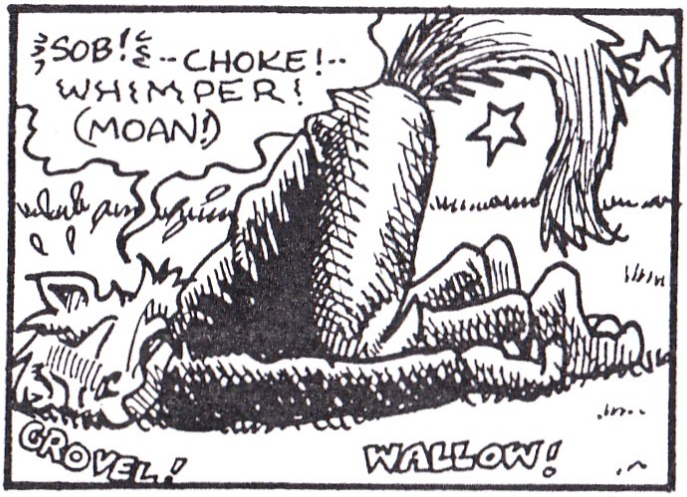
PLEASE -- PLEASE TAKE ME BACK TO HER!!
WALTER!!

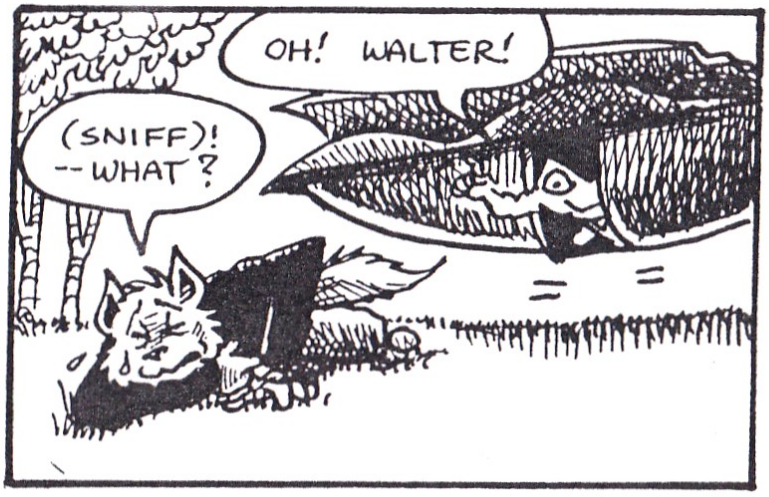

I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT HER!!
TAKE ME BACK TO AGHARTA DENNIS -- PLEASE--!!

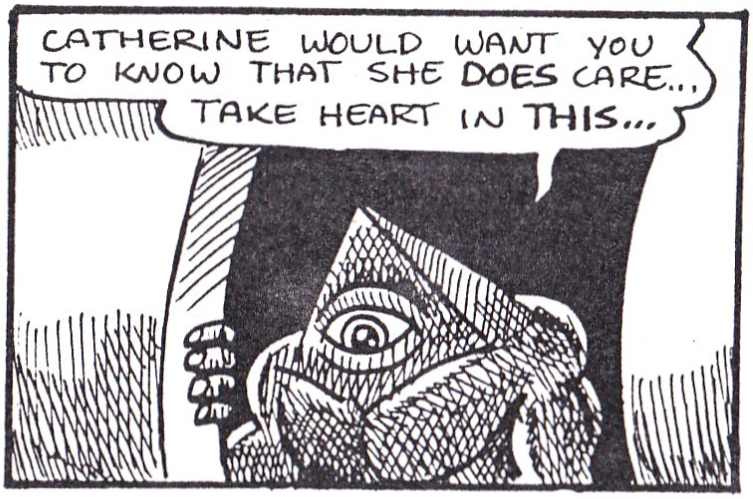
I'LL STAY INDOORS ALL THE TIME -- AND I'LL WEAR A RADIATION-PROOF SUIT WHENEVER I GO OUTSIDE--!!
I'LL DO ANYTHING

THAT CAN'T BE, WALTER! —YOU KNOW THAT!
NO! NO! TAKE ME BACK!!

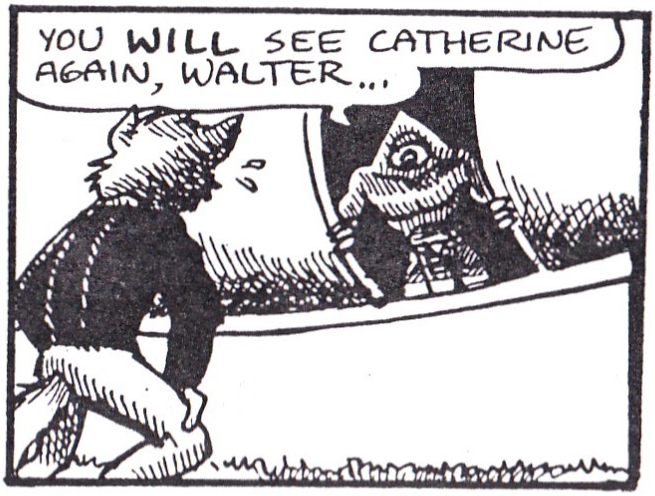

GO, WALTER!
BOOT!


SOB! --CHOKE!-- WHIMPER! (MOAN!)
GROVEL!
WALLOW!


OH! WALTER!
(SNIFF)! --WHAT?


CATHERINE WOULD WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT SHE DOES CARE... TAKE HEART IN THIS...

THE SOURCE GIVES CATHERINE ACCESS TO ALMOST ANYTHING-- --PEOPLE'S MINDS, --THE WORLD OF DREAMS...


YOU WILL SEE CATHERINE AGAIN, WALTER...

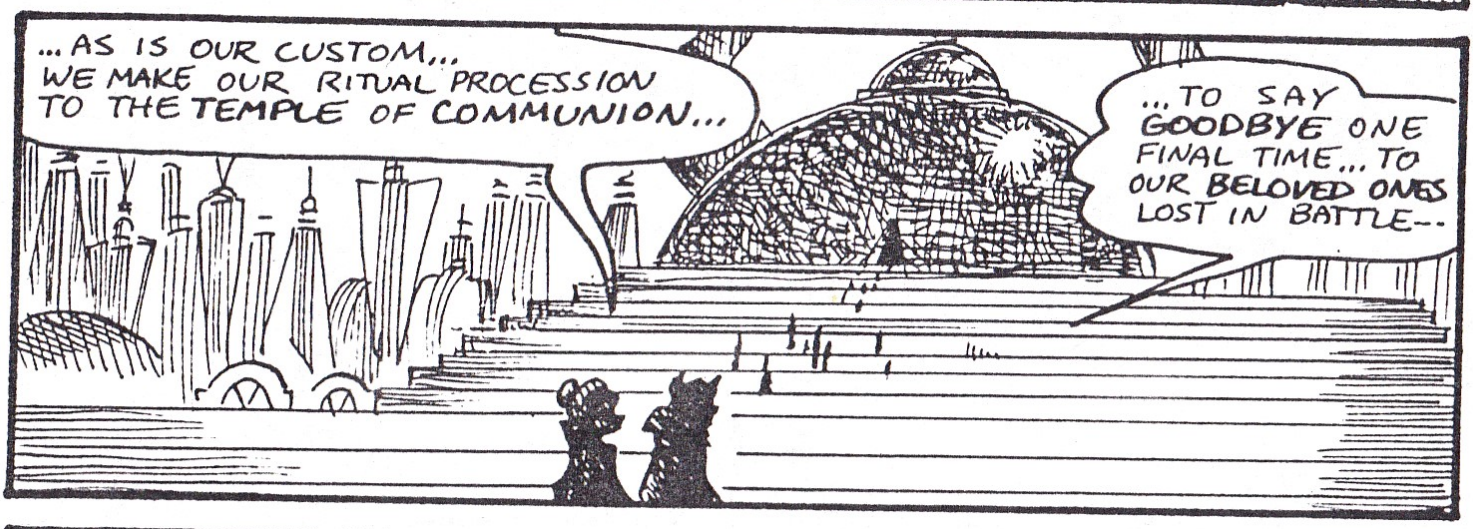
TAKE CARE... AND GOODBYE, MY FRIEND...!
(CHOKE!) GOODBYE, DENNIS-!
VOOM!

MEANWHILE...
THE SOURCE CAN REBUILD STRUCTURES...
...CAUSE UNHEALTHY VEGETATION TO BECOME VIGOROUS-- ROBUST--

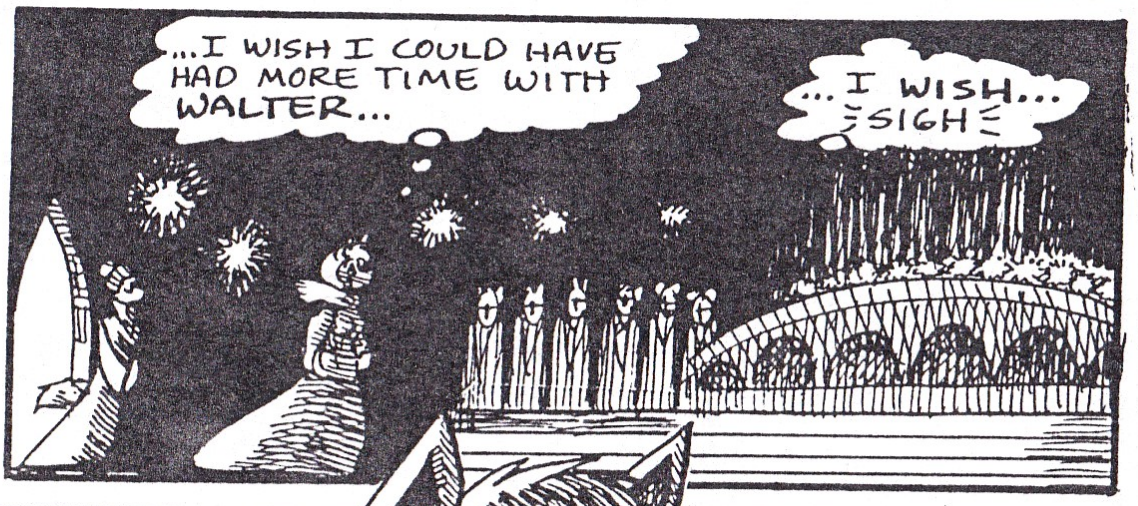
IT CAN ACCELLERATE HEALING... IT CAN DO ALMOST ANYTHING-- EXCEPT CREATE OR RESTORE LIFE--
--WHY DID SO MANY HAVE TO DIE--?

I'VE DONE ALL I CAN FOR NOW... THE SOURCE CAN ONLY HEAL THE VISIBLE SCARS...
SIGH

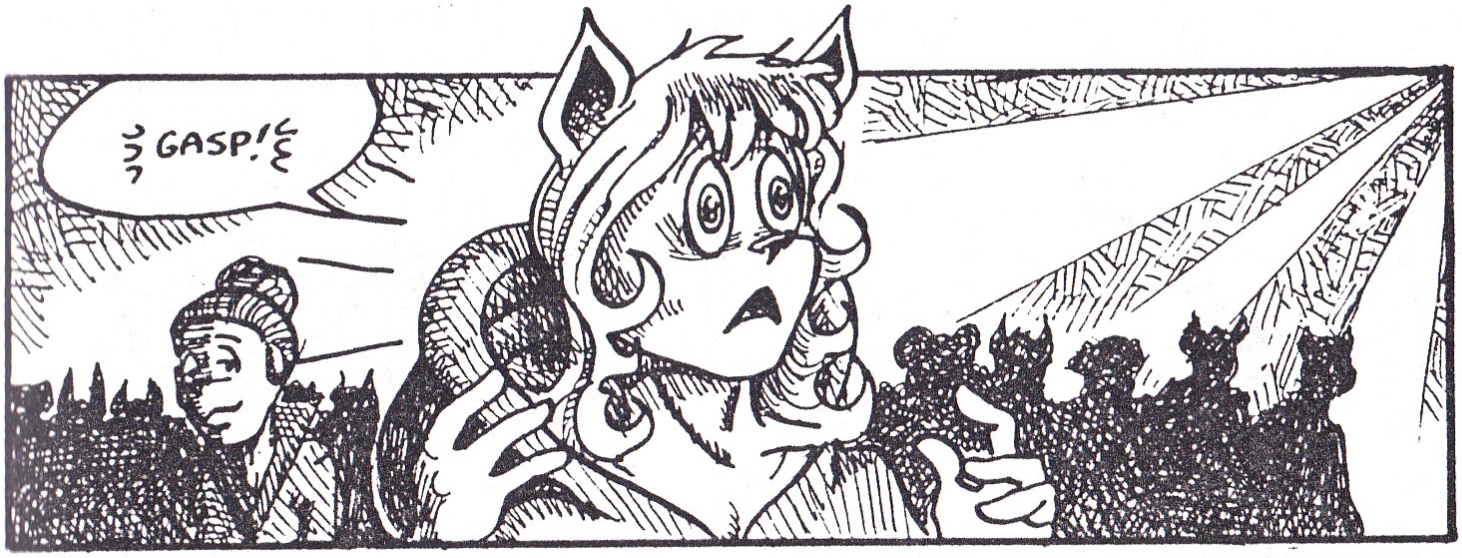
COME, MY DEAR... THE TIME HAS COME TO HONOR OUR DEAD...!

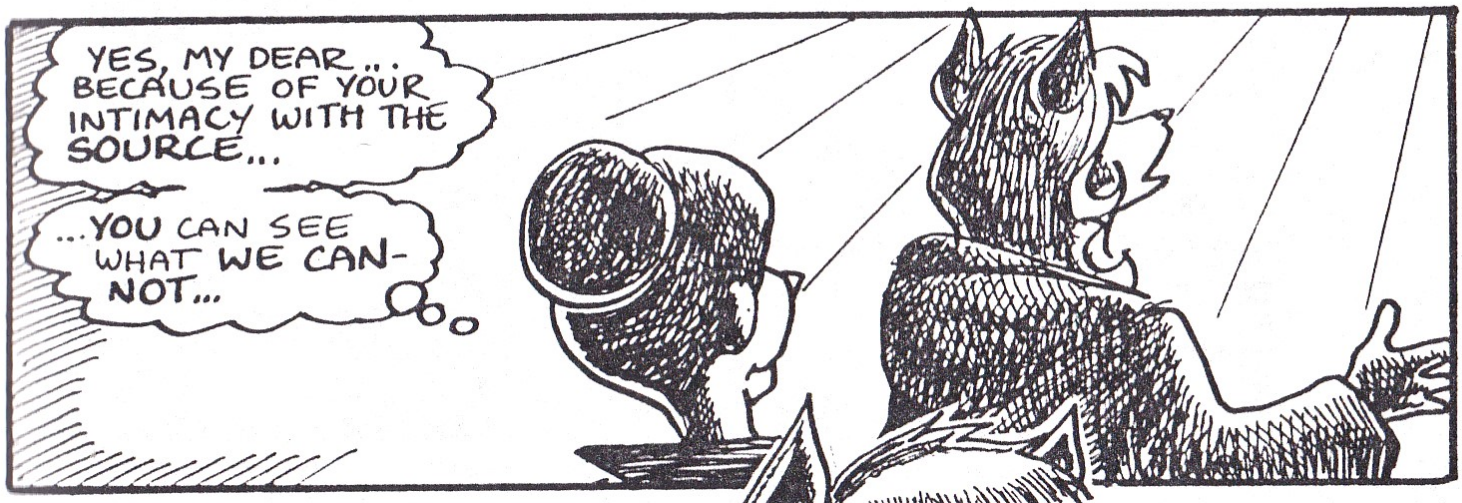

...AS IS OUR CUSTOM... WE MAKE OUR RITUAL PROCESSION TO THE TEMPLE OF COMMUNION...
...TO SAY GOODBYE ONE FINAL TIME... TO OUR BELOVED ONES LOST IN BATTLE--

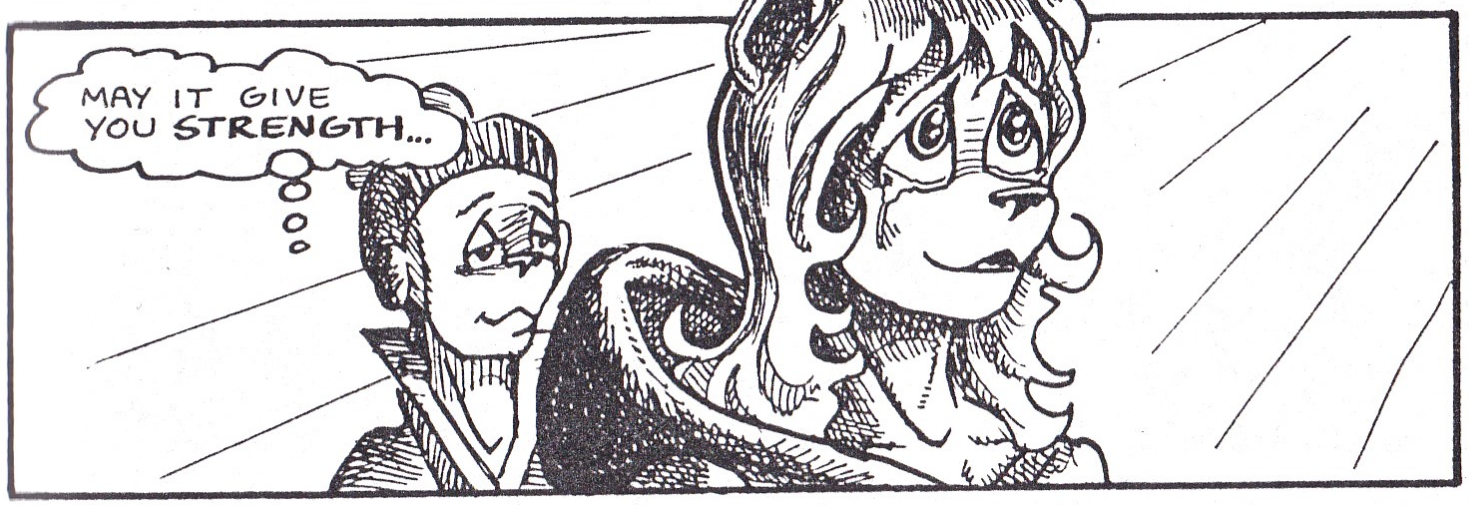
...THERE ARE TWO WHO WISH TO BID YOU FAREWELL...

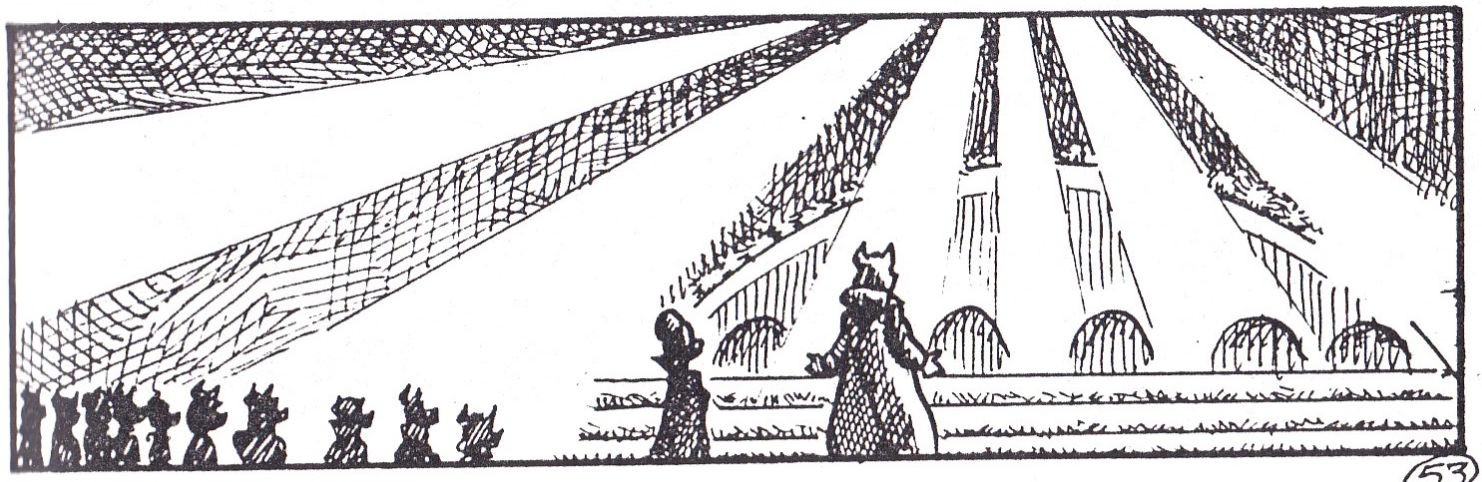

...I WISH I COULD HAVE HAD MORE TIME WITH WALTER...
...I WISH... SIGH

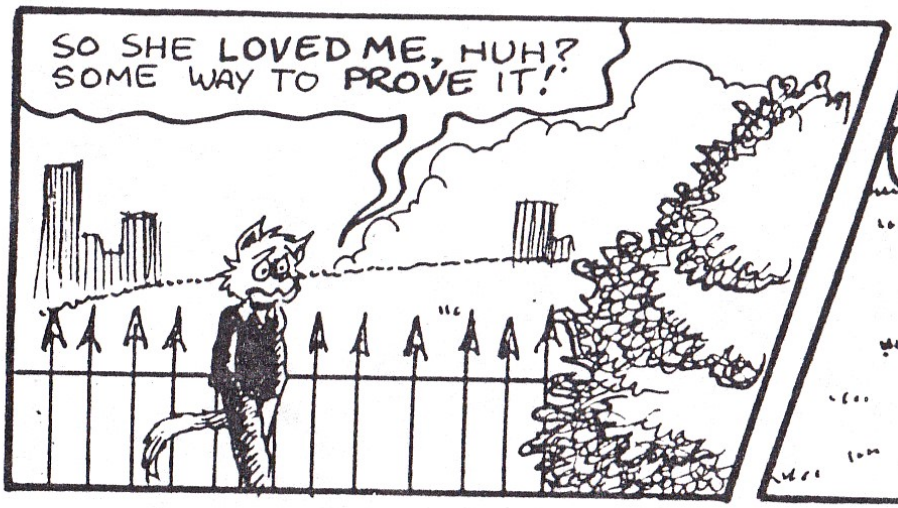
...I WISH I REALLY COULD SEE YOU AGAIN... DAD... AND MOTHER... JUST ONE MORE TIME...
...PERHAPS THEN I'D QUIT WONDERING IF I MADE THE RIGHT DECISION...!

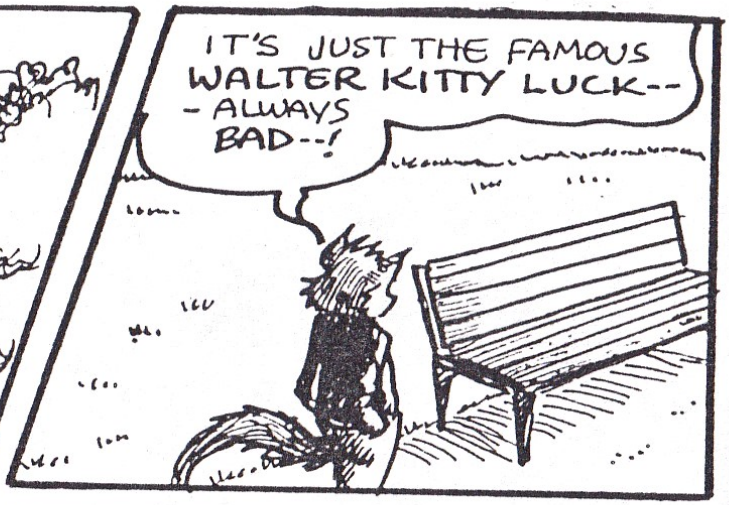

GASP!

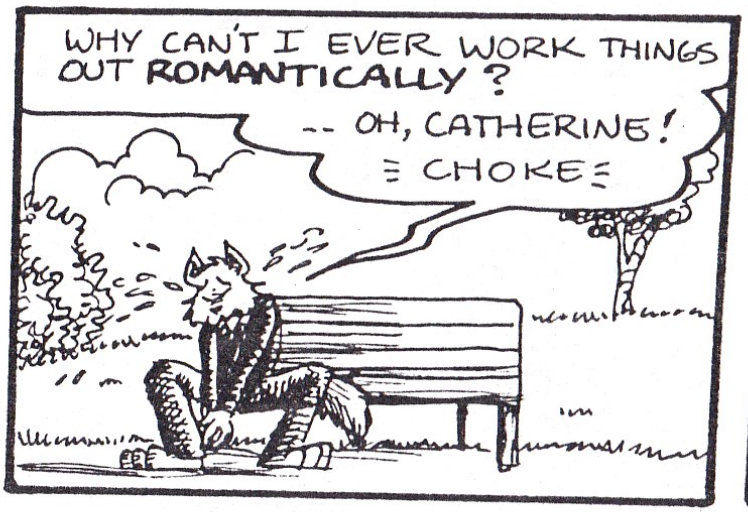

YES, MY DEAR... BECAUSE OF YOUR INTIMACY WITH THE SOURCE...
...YOU CAN SEE WHAT WE CAN-NOT...

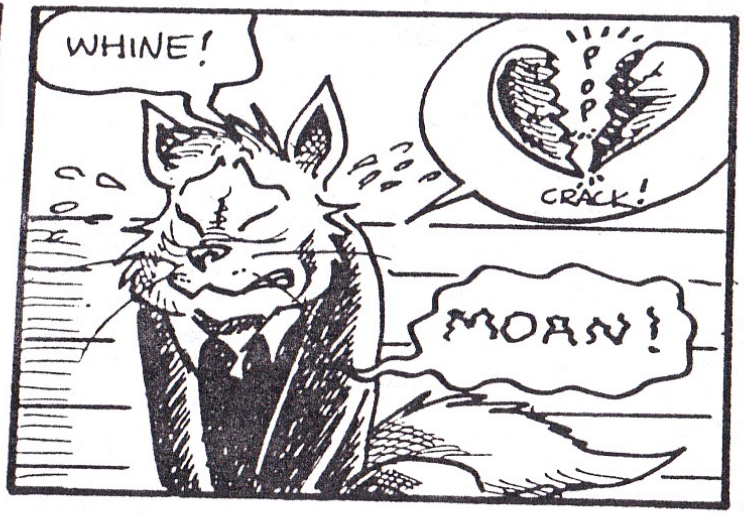

MAY IT GIVE YOU STRENGTH...

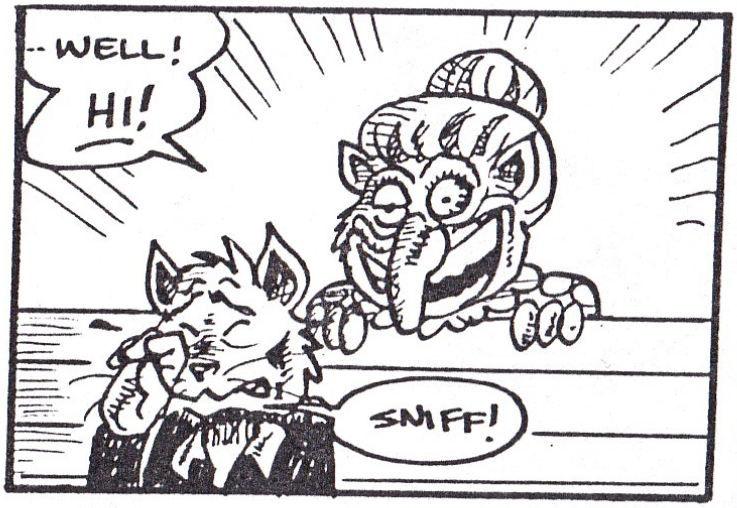


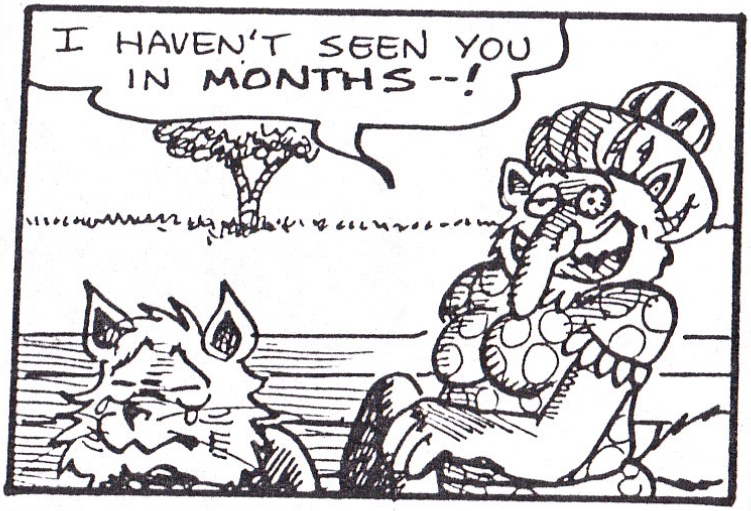

SO SHE LOVED ME, HUH? SOME WAY TO PROVE IT!


IT'S JUST THE FAMOUS WALTER KITTY LUCK-- - ALWAYS BAD--!


WHY CAN'T I EVER WORK THINGS OUT ROMANTICALLY?
-- OH, CATHERINE!
≡ CHOKE ≡

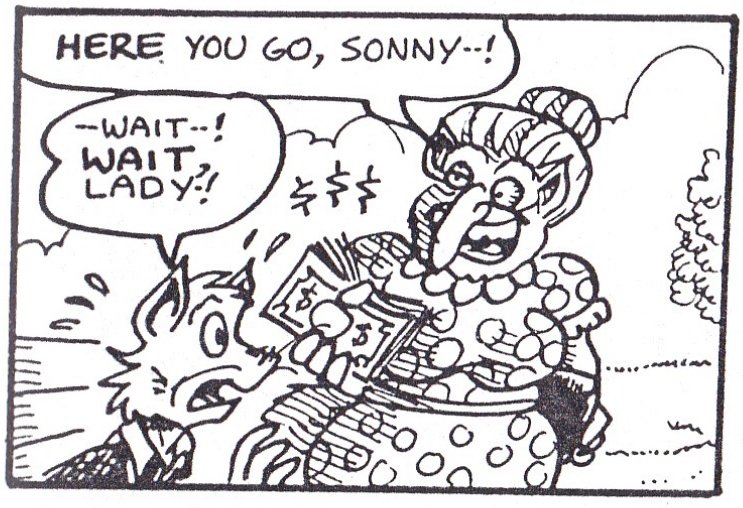

WHINE!
POP
CRACK!
MOAN!

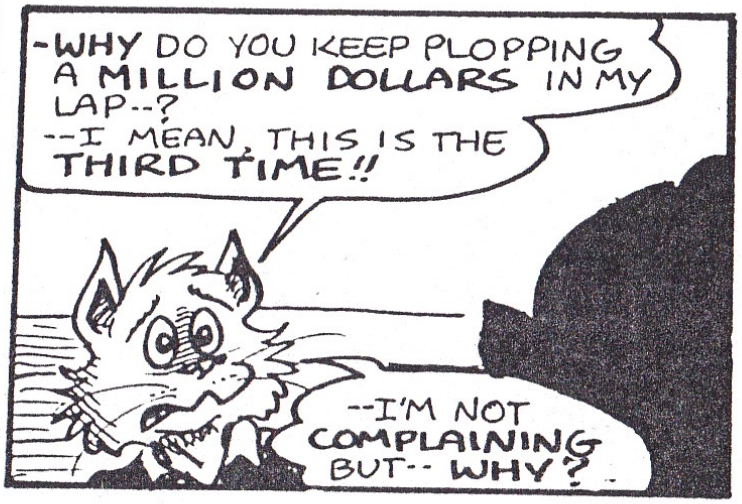

-- WELL!
HI!
SNIFF!

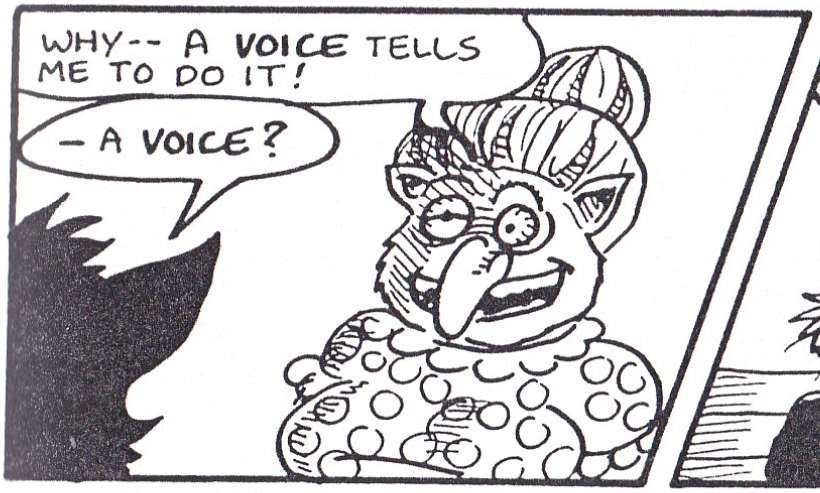

I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN MONTHS--!

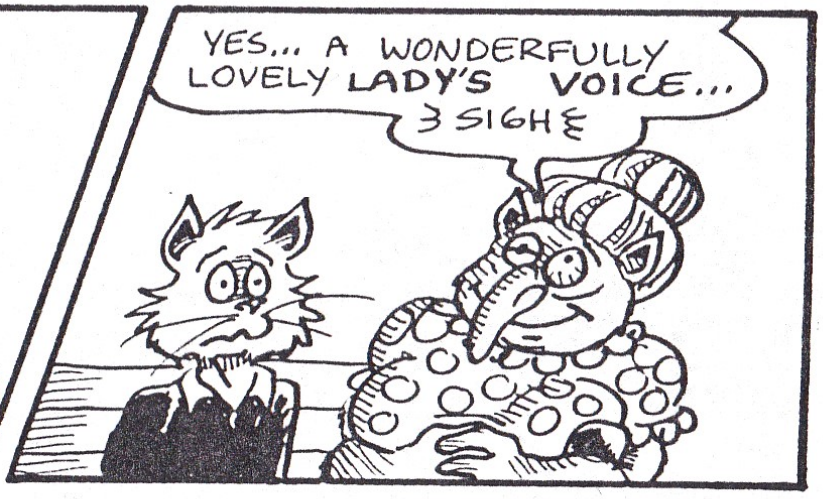
DID YOU TAKE A VACATION? DID YOU ENJOY THE MONEY?

WOULD YOU LIKE SOME MORE?
!

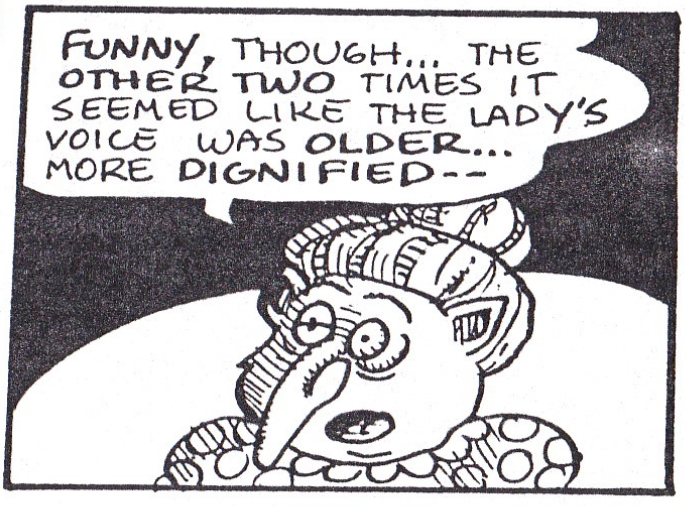

HERE YOU GO, SONNY--!
--WAIT--! WAIT, LADY--!

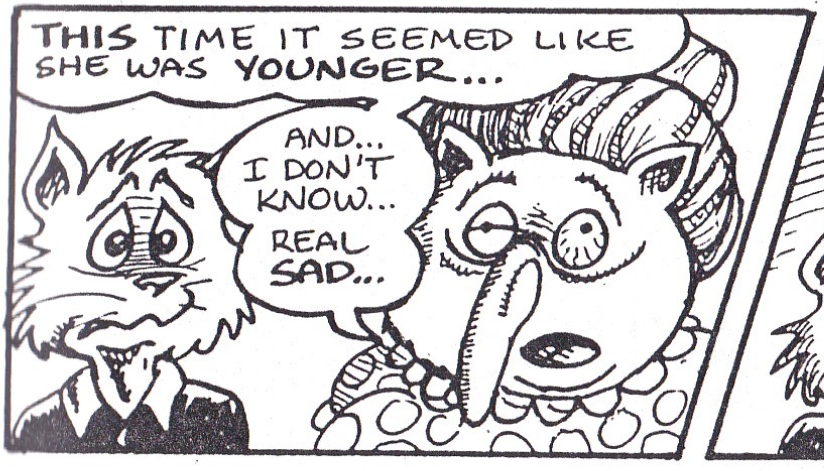

-WHY DO YOU KEEP PLOPPING A MILLION DOLLARS IN MY LAP--? --I MEAN, THIS IS THE THIRD TIME!!
--I'M NOT COMPLAINING BUT-- WHY?


WHY-- A VOICE TELLS ME TO DO IT!
-A VOICE?


YES... A WONDERFULLY LOVELY LADY'S VOICE...
SIGH

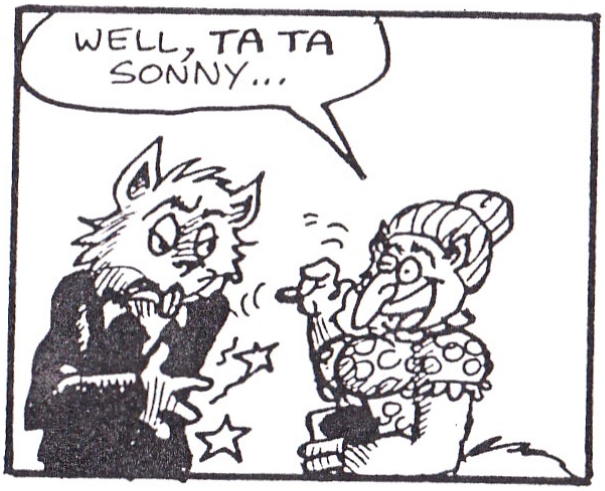
YOU'RE SAYING EVERY TIME YOU GAVE ME MONEY... YOU HEARD A WOMAN'S VOICE TELLING YOU TO DO IT?
THAT'S RIGHT!

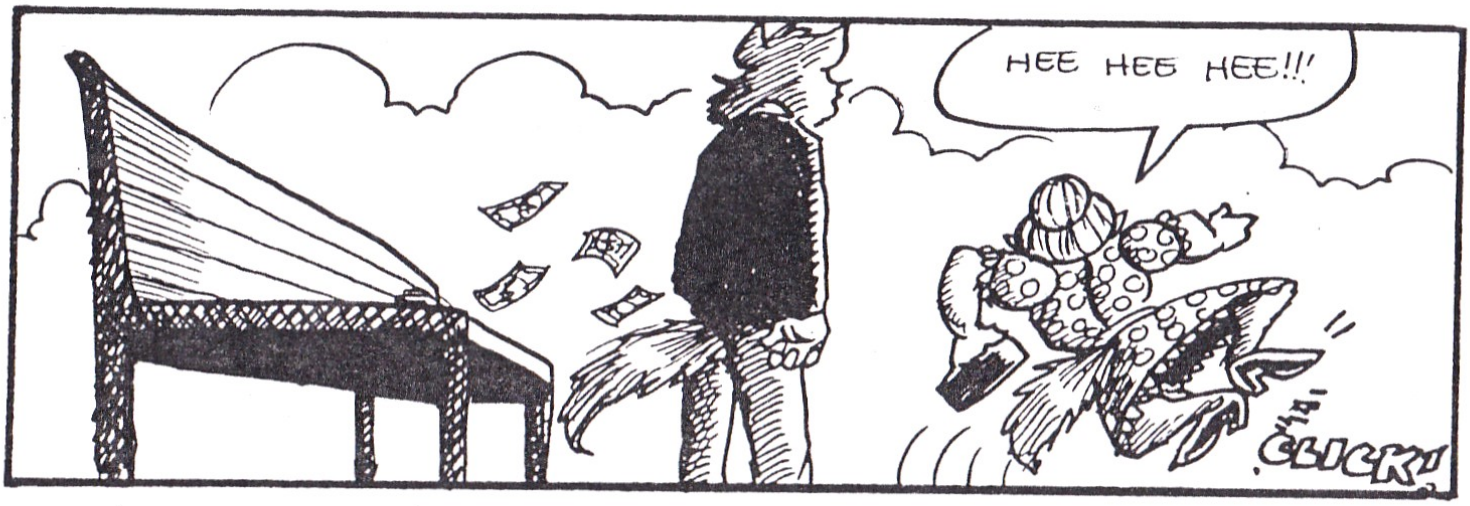

FUNNY, THOUGH... THE OTHER TWO TIMES IT SEEMED LIKE THE LADY'S VOICE WAS OLDER... MORE DIGNIFIED--

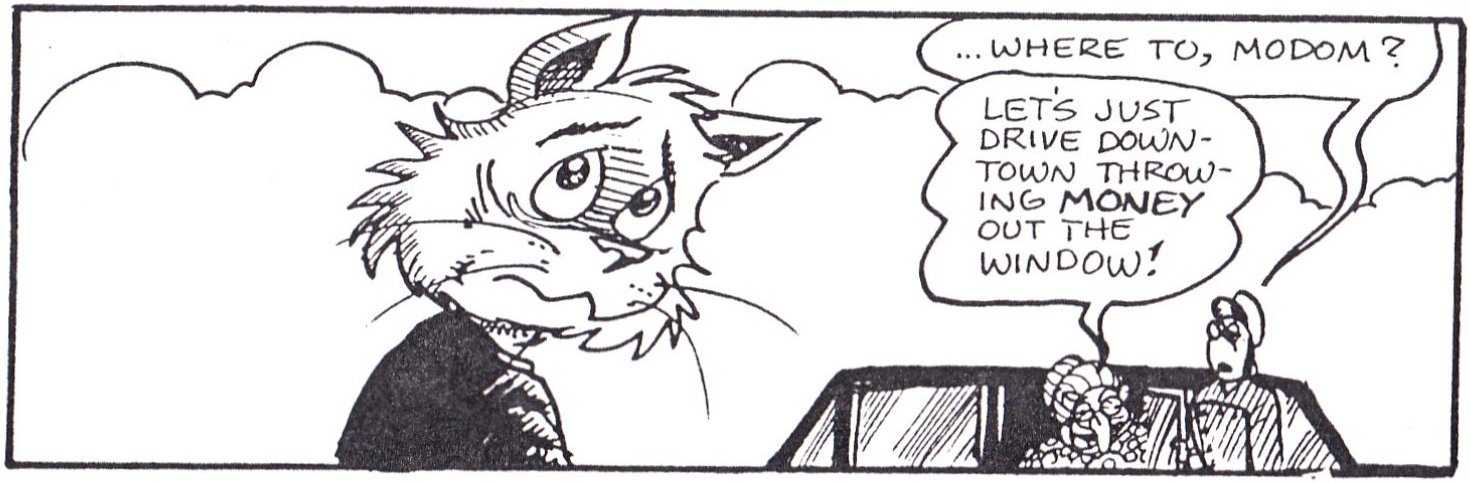

THIS TIME IT SEEMED LIKE SHE WAS YOUNGER...
AND... I DON'T KNOW... REAL SAD...

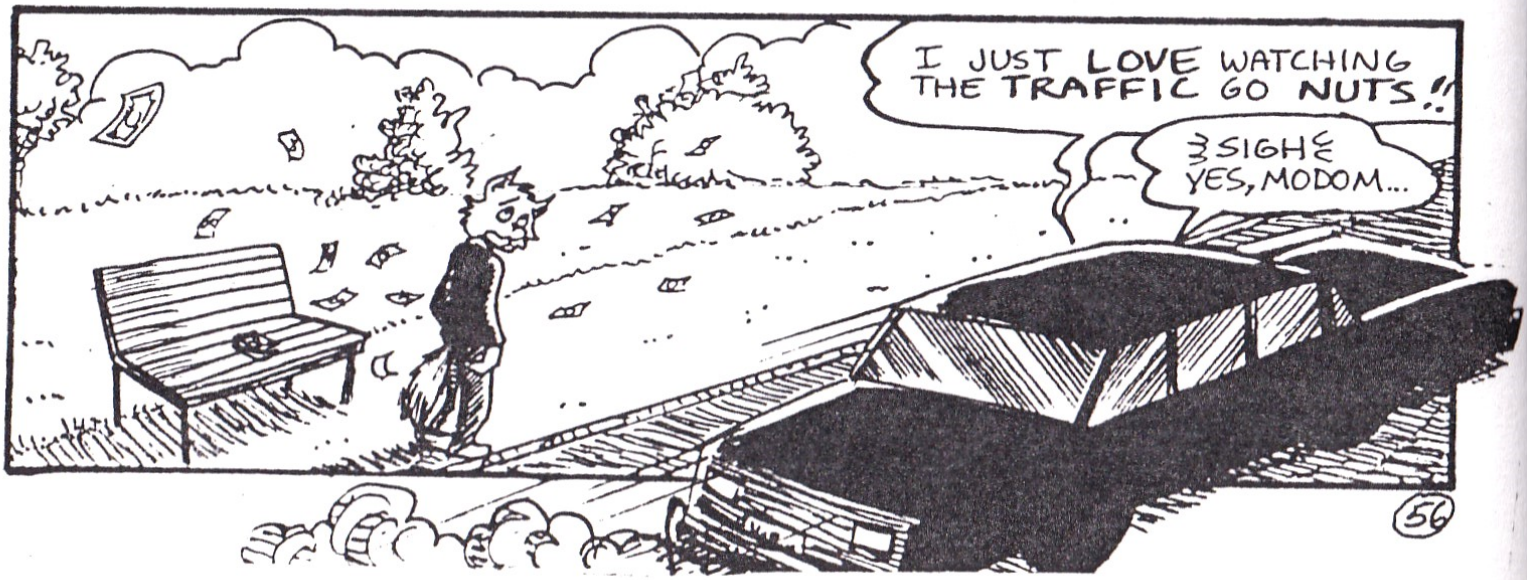
I WOULDN'T PUT TOO MUCH STOCK IN IT, THOUGH...
NO?
NO!

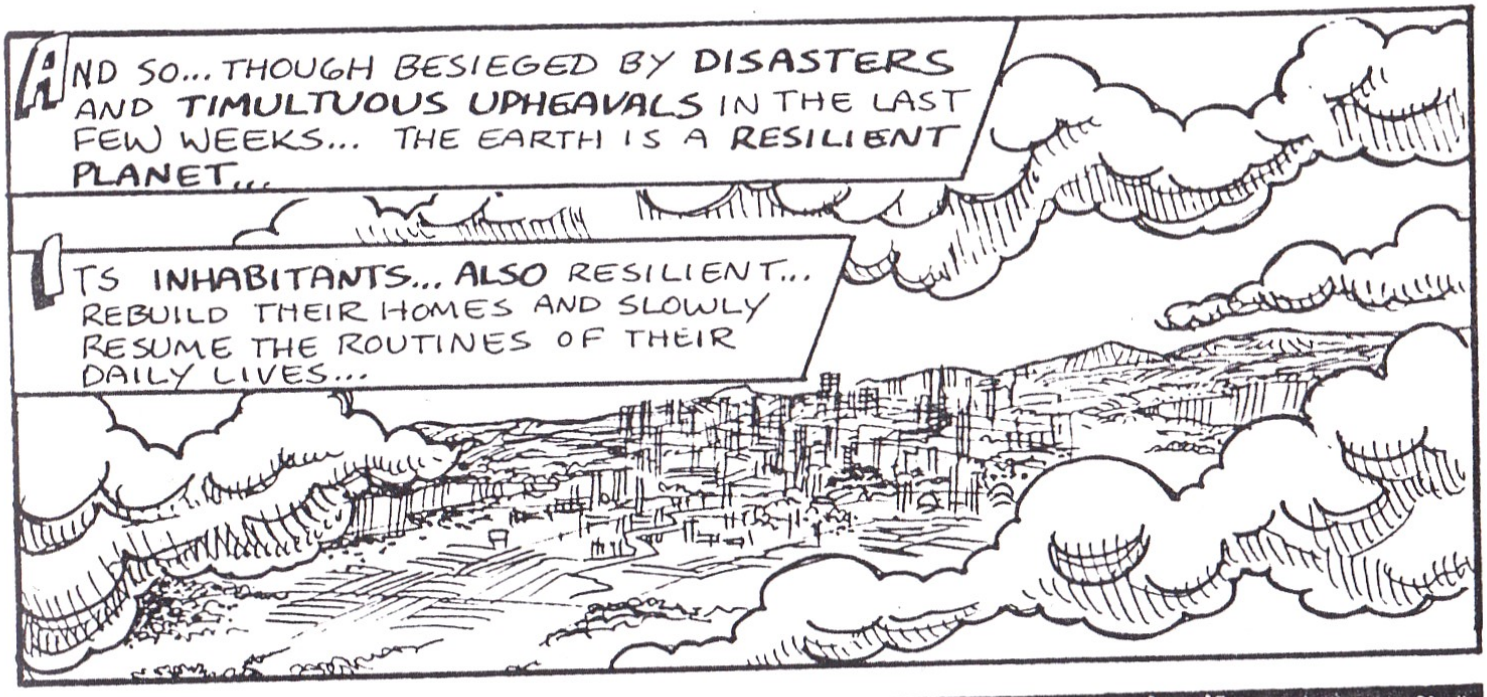
--I MEAN, I DON'T-- I FIGURE I'M JUST CRAZY--
... HEARING VOICES DON'T YA KNOW--?!
BOOF!
WHOOSH!
WUUUMP!

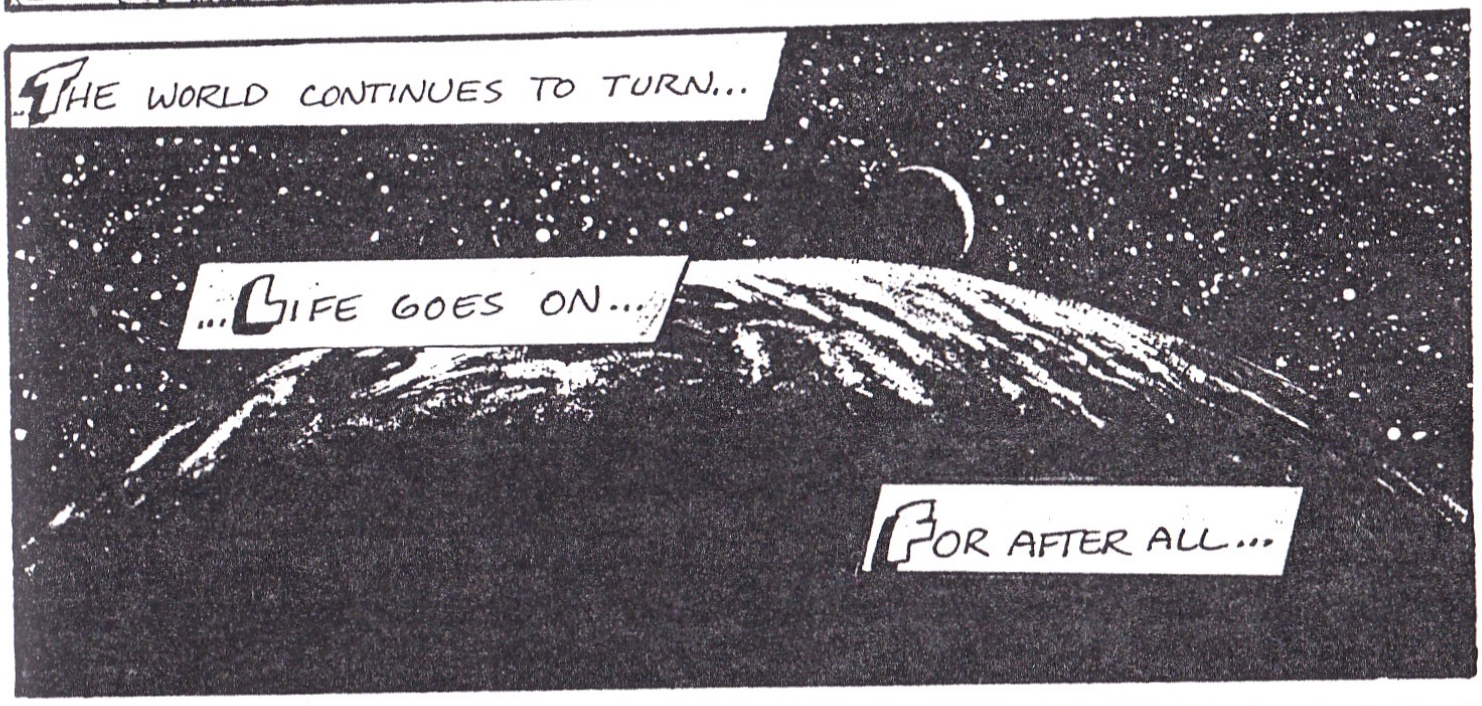

WELL, TA TA SONNY...

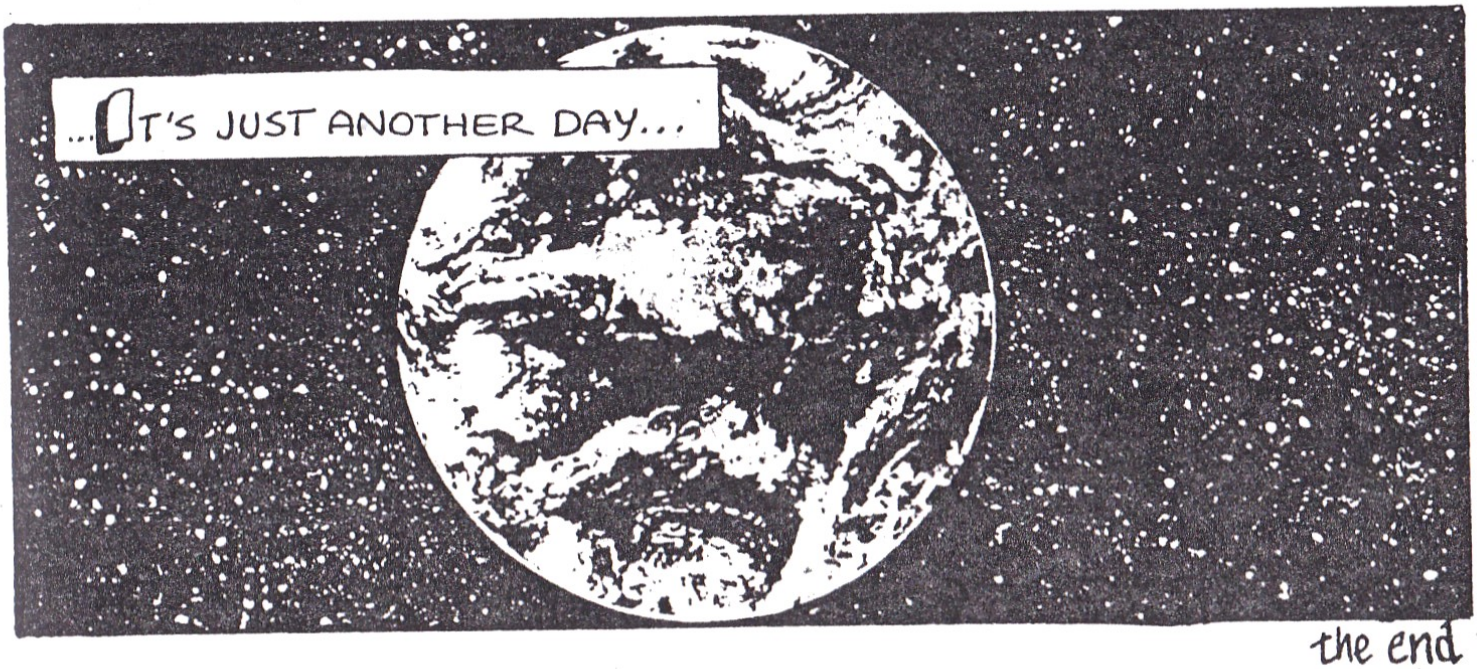

HEE HEE HEE!!!
CLICK!


...WHERE TO, MODOM?
LET'S JUST DRIVE DOWN-TOWN THROWING MONEY OUT THE WINDOW!


I JUST LOVE WATCHING THE TRAFFIC GO NUTS!!
SIGH
YES, MODOM...


AND SO... THOUGH BESIEGED BY DISASTERS AND TIMULTUOUS UPHEAVALS IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS... THE EARTH IS A RESILIENT PLANET...
ITS INHABITANTS... ALSO RESILIENT... REBUILD THEIR HOMES AND SLOWLY RESUME THE ROUTINES OF THEIR DAILY LIVES...


THE WORLD CONTINUES TO TURN...
...LIFE GOES ON...
FOR AFTER ALL...


...IT'S JUST ANOTHER DAY...

the end

WALTER KITTY IN THE HOLLOW EARTH

Story, Art, Editing

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Executive Producer, Associate Editor

Laura Shaw

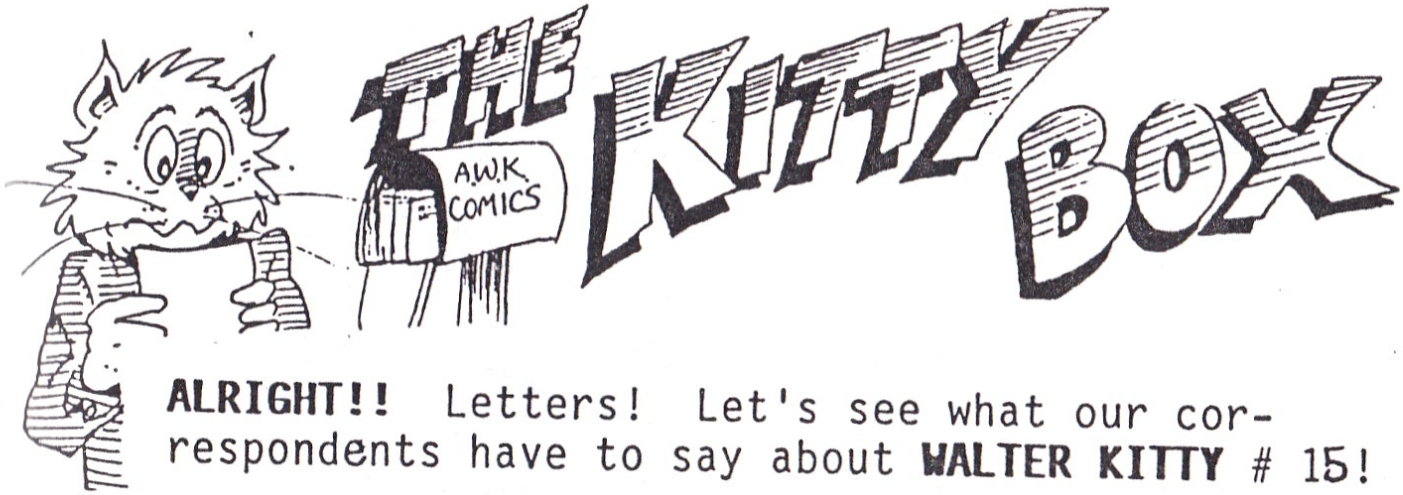
Creative Consultants

Lori Eichelberger

Roger Kunshick

Production

Ginny's Copying



ALRIGHT!! Letters! Let's see what our correspondents have to say about **WALTER KITTY** # 15!

Dear Uncle Mark:

I look forward to the final issue of The Hollow Earth with truly mixed emotions. I've waited so long to see how it comes out, but after enjoying it for so long it's going to be kind of sad when it's over. This is the only "funny animal" comic I have an interest in, because most of the ones I see don't really have any kind of story going on. The Hollow Earth has been more like a novel, with a fascinating (and educational) plotline, and characters I've grown to genuinely care about. Walter especially has changed so much (and so little) from the first issue. From a nerdy loser to nerdy hero--he's done it without losing either drama or comedy. And Dr. Foxx! He's been about the most complex character I've ever run across in a comic. I'm going to miss them all when it's over. It's been a rare pleasure watching all of the characters grow in personality, motivation, and outlook. And it's been a joy to watch the art style improve and mature over the (gulp!) years. But on the other hand, we'll all get to see how the story comes out at last and that will be great!!! Congratulations on staying the distance with style, and please don't let Walter go. I like the fuzzy little nerd.

Lori Eichelberger
Austin, Tx

P.S. Why are they called "Boots"?

Why--because they are not called "Coots", my dear! Ha Ha! Ahem. Actually, I remember way back when I first made up those names, I was just trying to come up with some names for the inner earth races that didn't just ape the actual mythological names for them, the Deros and the Teros. As you can see, I settled for some really silly ones.

And don't worry about my giving Walter up-- he's pretty likable--even if he is a nerd!

Dear Mark,

I've read WALTER KITTY since #1, and I've liked them all. I have to confess, though, that I enjoy your shorter stories more--probably 'cuz I don't have to wait ½ a year for the next chapter. I loved "W.K. of the S.S.C.P.P.A." in FURRLOUGH--any chance of more Walter Kitty space adventures? The ending left it wide open for a sequel. And speaking of sequels, didn't you mention once that you had an idea for a sequel to "The Hollow Earth"? Now just what would **that** involve-- another 8-year project?! Well, we still have the last chapter of "T.H.E." to go...

And it better be good!

Your chum,

Mike Stephens
Austin, Tx

Thanks Mike! Hope you liked the final chapter. I'd love to do another SSCPPA story--except that first I've got this great idea for a story in which Walter makes a bet that he can circle the globe in some ridiculously small amount of time--and then I've got another idea about Walter and a fancy victorian submarine...

Dear Uncle Mark,

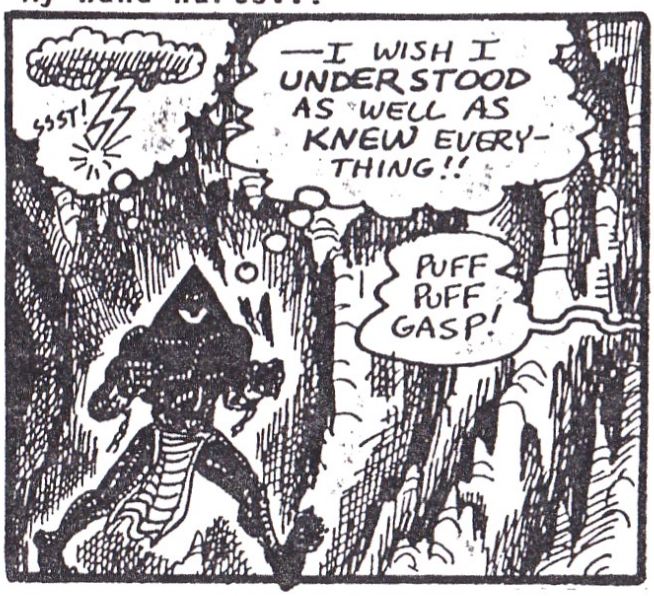
So! Part 12 of "The Hollow Earth" is near-- I confess I wondered if you would ever finish the damn thing. How many pages has the story run now? I'd guess around six or seven hundered. That's got to be a record for a funny animal epic. **CEREBUS** doesn't count 'cuz it's set in the **human** world, and Cerebus is the only funny animal **in** it. You're treading Walt Disney water here, and it works.

If I'd known how good this story was going to get, I'd have been much more enthusiastic about it at the beginning. I really like the juxtaposition of funny animals and real emotions and real dangers (and death!). Makes it all seem much more **personal** some how. Oh, yeah, and I like your humor, too. Funny jokes. Make laugh.
Ha. Ha.

Your pal,

E. Bradnough
(of the Austin Bradnoughs)

RRRRRRRRMMMM. Letter GOOD. No like joke... joke BAD!RRRAAAAA!! Actually, total page count of "The Hollow Earth", not counting covers, one-page gags, or title pages, comes to 467 pages. Ga!! My hand hurts..!



Dear Mark,

What ever happened to the multi-million dollar "Hollow Earth" animated motion picture? If the voices haven't been cast yet, here are my ideas for who should be who:

Michael J. Foxx as Walter!
Julia Roberts as Catherine!
Harrison Ford as Dr. Foxx!
Michelle Pfeiffer as Mariana!
David Warner as Zanomanon!
Anthony Hopkins as Dennis!
and... Sean Connery as Prof. Scotty!!

Well, Whaddaya think, huh? Seriously, do you have any particular voices in mind for your characters? Especially, I'd be interested to know what Walter sounds like...

Joseph Neely
Concrete, Tx

Ok, hows this...Patrick McGoohan as Dr. Foxx! Diane Lane as Catherine! Meryl Streep as Mariana! W. Morgan Sheppard as Zanomanon! James Earl Jones as Dennis! And, yeah, I like Sean Connery as Prof. Scotty! And as I said before, Don Knotts will always be the Definitive voice of Walter!! Ha Ha!! Just kidding, of course! Actually,

I don't really know what Walter should sound like-- kind of a neutral voice, I suppose. Just so long as it's not Gilbert Gotfried!!

Dear Uncle Mark,

Catherine's unconscious **again?!** Jeez, if you keep this up, she's going to qualify as a narcoleptic. I hope she wakes up before the story's over! This is a serious weakness in your story--Catherine is one of the main focal points , yet she's been fully **out** of it for more than half its length. Couldn't you contrive to have her conscious for more than one issue at a time? What would it hurt to let Catherine wipe up the earth's interior with Zanomanon's mangy hide? All I can say is-- for a strong female role model, Catherine sure **sleeps** a lot!

Still reading,

Sherri Wayne
Greenwich, Conn

Yes, I know it's ubalanced to keep knocking Catherine out--but with her ability to summon the all-powerful SOURCE, she had to be kept out of the way to allow the story's events to procede unimpeded. If conscious, she'd just call the source whenever there's a crisis, and POOF!--No menace. You're right that it's a flaw in the story, though-- I just didn't know how else to get around it.

Dear Mark,

Was that really Zanomanon **humping the world** in **WALTER KITTY** #15?! Hey, now, **wait** a minute--!

I guess we know what Zanomanon really wants to do to the world now! Good Lord!!

Keep up the good work!

Gail Flawna
Austin, Tx

I endeavor to keep it up at all times!! Ooh! Sorry about that! Good Lord!!

Dear Mark,

Who dares interrupt awesome Zanomanon as he glories in his villainy? And if they do, is it "Globus interruptus"? Zanomanon is a villain for our times--an evil genius uncomplicated by self-doubt or internal conflict!
He knows what he wants, he knows how to get it, and he permits nothing to get in his way!

I assume he's republican?

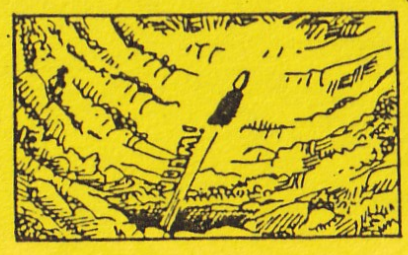
Sincerely,

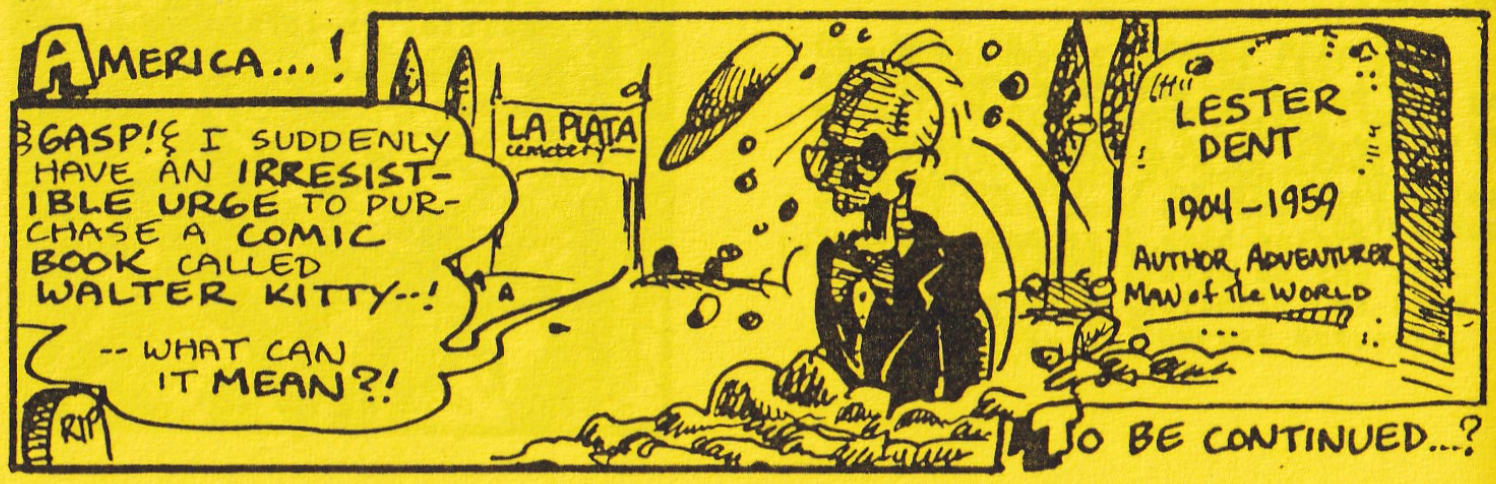
Eric Price
Los Angeles,CA

Nope, Zanomanon is above such paltry surface dweller's conceits. He's as truly apolitical as anyone could be. He hates EVERYBODY!

That's it for this time, boys and girls! Now that "The Hollow Earth" is finally finished, Uncle Mark is going to take a little well-deserved rest before beginning another multi-chapter epic-- but rest assured, Walter will return-- and his next adventure promises to be a wild and wooly one-- or should that be -- fast and furry...? Whatever! Be here next time for a totally DIFFERENT DIRECTION-- and in the meantime, write us!

AWK Comics
2701 Penny Ln. #219
Austin, Tx 78757





TO BE CONTINUED...?

Next Issue:

WALTER VISITS HIS GRANDFATHER, ALSO NAMED WALTER, WHO TELLS HIM ABOUT HIS LIFE AS A BOY IN NEW YAWK CITY-- AND ABOUT HIS MEETING WITH A CERTAIN LEGENDARY ARCH ENEMY OF EVIL...

M. SHAW '94

JOIN US NEXT TIME FOR AN EXCITING NEW ADVENTURE... WALTER KITTY #17... BE HERE-- ALOHA--!

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